PRICE ONE PENNY.]

SPLENDID NEWS FOR ALL READERS.

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"THE BLINDING RAY OF A LANTERN THREW THEIR AFFRIGHTED FACES INTO FULL VIEW." (*See page* 787.)

JERRY DODDS: MILLIONAIRE.

A School Yarn of Mirth and Roguery.

By H. BARROW-NORTH,
AUTHOR OF "THE BOYS OF DORMITORY THREE," "GOMBURG'S REVENGE," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXI.

COBBE'S LITTLE PARTY SETS OUT.

T wanted but five minutes to midnight as Cobbe, slipping from his bed in the Long Dormitory, walked across the room to where Johnson lay, and shook him gently.

"Are you ready, Johnson?" he asked in a low voice.

The latter sat up with a blank stare for a moment; then he smiled.

"All serene," he replied. "Ha, ha!" "Was I asleep? I tried every dodge to keep awake, but I must have snoozed. I'd just counted up to seven thousand when I popped off."

Cobbe grinned pleasantly.

"Counting is too monotonous," he rejoined. "My dodge is to recite inwardly. I've given 'Horatius' four times from beginning to end; and I believe that would have failed me but I put the pillow under my back and lay with my head down—jolly uncomfortable, too, I can tell you. But hurry up. We'll dress first and waken Toplady and Pridgitt afterwards."

Quickly assuming their attire, they proceeded to the further end of the lengthy room, where Toplady and Pridgitt occupied adjoining beds. In the semi-darkness of the room one might have traced them by their healthy and heavy breathing as they slumbered soundly.

Seizing the bed-clothes, the two visitors turned them sharply back over the iron rail of their cots and calmly waited.

A fretful murmur of discomfort came from the sleepers as they were thus rudely bereft of their covering, and each one stretched forth an arm and groped futilely for the counterpane.

The two watchers surveyed them silently; then suddenly each of the sleepers sat up disconsolately.

"I say——" began Pridgitt.

"Tumble out, you fellows," whispered Cobbe. "We've no time to lose; those other chaps will be waiting for us."

Toplady glanced towards the cheerless blackness of the neighbouring window.

"I say, Cobbe," he began, "I've been thinking over this business, and——"

"Thinking, have you?" repeated Cobbe with a faint irony. "It's the first time I ever heard a fellow snore as loud as you have been doing in his thoughts. But come along now. There's the clock striking already. I wouldn't like Sparrow and Whiting to be waiting for us: it looks shady somehow to have two kids like them more eager for the affair than ourselves. Looks almost as though we were funking it. Steady now or you'll be rousing some of these other chaps."

Reluctantly stretching forth his ungainly legs from the bed, followed by Pridgitt, who watched him critically, Toplady after a faint murmur of protest began to dress.

"You'll feel better when you get outside," whispered Cobbe encouragingly, as he and Johnson passed the various articles of their apparel to them one by one till they were dressed; "and now come along."

Treading carefully past the other beds, whose occupants slept on soundly, they cautiously opened the door and passed through. Proceeding quickly along, in the soft rubber shoes they had smuggled upstairs for the purpose, at the corner of the main corridor they met Sparrow and Whiting, who pranced gleefully though silently towards them.

"Here you are!" chuckled Sparrow elately. "Pike and Firkin haven't come yet. It has struck twelve; what are we to do?"

A whispered consultation took place.

"Most likely Pike has dozed off," said Cobbe; "and of course that drowsy beggar Firkin is fast asleep. I think we'd better go for them."

Turning away to the door of a neighbouring small dormitory, occupied by Firkin and Pike and three small juniors, they opened the door and peered within.

Close to the door, hurriedly dressing by the subdued light, stood Pike with an anxious look on his face; but as he turned at the creak of the door and caught sight of the intruding faces, his evident despondence changed to a beaming look of welcome.

"Hullo, you chaps," he whispered gladly. "I thought I'd done it, and that you had left us behind. I put the soap and my hair-brush in bed to keep me awake, but hanged if I didn't lose myself after all."

"I'd try the wash-bowl next time if I were you," grinned Cobbe. "But how about Firkin?"

"I've wakened him," declared Pike. "But all he says is 'go 'long, Pike, I'm ready!' I fancy the lazy beggar doesn't mean to come."

"We'll soon see about that," said Cobbe.

Turning to the adjoining bed, he approached it on tip-toe; but as he did so Firkin sat slowly up and rubbed his eyes drowsily. Cobbe and the others stared as they saw that he was fully attired save for a pair of canvas shoes, which he began to pull on, with a lazy grin.

"It's such a jolly nuisance dressing and undressing," he remarked explanatorily, "besides wasting a lot of time, so I snugged in just as I was except for my shoes—are you ready, Pike, you lazy tortoise?"

Cobbe and the other visitors grinned with obvious appreciation of the untidy stratagem, and even Pike smiled with a discomfited admiration.

"I was slow there," he declared. "But it's a wrinkle for next time."

Turning away after this whispered little episode, the party once more set out on their ill-conceived expedition. Proceeding silently along in Indian file, with Cobbe leading, they traversed the very route Rochester and Macpherson had taken not three minutes before.

Reaching the lower passage, they proceeded swiftly along in the darkness, each one following blindly in the steps of his predecessor, with Cobbe still at the head.

Curiously enough, as the latter paused suddenly to fumble for a match midway, the long line of followers, unaware of the manœuvre, walked down on him in a mass. A cry of anger came from Pridgitt, accompanied by a noisy murmur around; and as Cobbe struck the match, he looked back on the disturbed group.

"My goodness, Pridgitt!" he observed, "what's to do now? We shall look nice if you bring the Doctor or someone down on us."

"It's Pike here," said Pridgitt plaintively as he held his hand to his nose. "The silly kangaroo has gone and jabbed the back of his head in my nose."

"I didn't," said Pike; "I just drew up in the scramble, and he ran into me."

"So far as I can see, then," said Cobbe severely, "he jabbed his nose into your head, eh, Pike?"

"Yes," asserted Pike; "and a jolly bony nose it is, too!"

The laughter following this remark, the only observation approaching the jocular which Pike had ever been known to make, speedily restored the party to the good humour which had been somewhat shaken, with the exception of Pridgitt; and proceeding onward as Cobbe struck another match, they reached the door. To their surprise they found it already unsecured.

"Hullo!" whispered Cobbe as he stared. "Why, the door is not fastened, boys. The careless beggars have forgotten it. A nice thing to leave us unprotected like this! We shall be hearing of all of us being murdered in our beds next."

"Ha, ha!" jeered Toplady. "What a bull!"

"Anyhow," frowned Cobbe, "it is beastly carelessness on the part of Grigg or someone; and it might easily be made use of by some dishonest person for the purpose of robbery—but come along, boys, we must be off for the nectarines."

Opening the door, apparently quite unconscious of the unintentional irony of his words, and followed by the whole party, obviously untroubled by any qualms of conscience regarding their own questionable designs, he led the way out.

"Of course," remarked Cobbe as they drew away from the school, and as though half a doubt had suggested itself to him, "these nectarines, boys, if we didn't pluck them they would rot on the walls. The place is awfully neglected. Old Carey would never gather them; and as for Sir Godfrey and that friend of his, Farron, nectarines are beneath them. A precious funny hole the Priory is when you come to think of it, with those three living there alone. I could do with that fellow Hill who went away; but this Farron somehow gives me the shivers; I shouldn't like to meet him up here to-night."

As he spoke the party had reached the little wooden gate which led into the plantation of the Priory. From behind them came the mournful cadence of the waves below breaking monotonously on the shore; while in front the wind sighed with a complaining sadness through the gently swaying branches of the larches. As the party passed through, it became afflicted with a sudden silence, till at last Firkin spoke with unexpected seriousness.

"He gave me the shivers, too," he declared; "and I always noticed a queer thing about him."

"What was that, Firkin?" asked the company.

"Why," said Firkin sinking his voice to a low and solemn note," he always used to watch poor Jerry."

The party walked along with much less cheerfulness; then Sparrow spoke with a quaver.

"Perhaps he set an evil eye on him," he suggested superstitiously.

"Perhaps he did," said Firkin. "Anyhow, he always watched him. And there was another funny thing about him that you may have noticed."

"No, what was that, Firkin?" asked the group.

"Why," said Firkin, "it was very peculiar; did none of you ever notice how his face was like Jerry's—not Jerry's good old eyes you know, but the mouth, and nose, and brows and all that."

"Why, so he was!" declared Cobbe in sheer surprise as he drew up. For a moment the little group stood silently as they debated Firkin's strange remark; then starting once more they proceeded dejectedly.

"I say, you chaps," declared Toplady at length, with querulous protest, "considering that we are coming here for what we are, I—I think you might have chosen a different subject. I'm not squeamish, but all the same you've made me feel pretty seedy."

"I don't know how we got on it," said Cobbe apologetically, and evidently troubled in his own mind by the melancholy and unpleasant ideas the conversation had aroused. "I'm agreeable to change —and hullo!" he exclaimed with an assumption of cheerfulness, "here we are, boys, out of the wood, and there's the garden wall."

CHAPTER XXXII.

A TERRIBLE RETREAT.

MEANWHILE, Rochester and Macpherson, hastening silently ahead after their departure from the school, had made their way towards the Priory by the self-same route which, a few minutes later, the unworthy group behind had followed.

To their sturdy nerves even, as they walked along the plantation path, everything seemed strange and eerie in the whispering silence of the night. At the bottom of the dell a small brook gurgled along with a far-off murmur, like the sound of stealthy and mysterious voices, and within the wood all was still, save for the startling rush of some frightened rabbit as the light of the lantern sent it scudding through the bracken, or the drowsy croon of some half-aroused wood-pigeon.

The ray of the lantern was, however, distinctly cheering; but as they drew out of the plantation, Rochester once more obscured the light.

Halting a moment till their eyes again became accustomed to the gloom, they approached the ruined gateway which gave free entrance to the wilderness beyond. Passing through on tip-toe, they paused. Beyond, across the distant further wall, a faint nimbus of light from some hidden window shining in the courtyard was seen; but between, a long stretch of garden lay impenetrably dark in its encompassing walls. From the right the sweet perfume of roses, growing in wild, untended profusion, came on their nostrils, and somewhere in front the purling drip of the old fountain, as its water trickled from the basin into the pool below, could be heard.

Avoiding these unseen obstacles, they groped their way for a few yards along the pathway, losing it presently as they drew up in a tangle of overgrown raspberry canes. The faint halo, however, still showed ahead, marking the position of the distant courtyard; and turning away again to the left after a moment's whispered conference, they struck the wall with its long line of nectarine and peach trees, for which the Priory had once been famous. Following its trend they proceeded stealthily. Reaching the farther corner for a moment, they blundered against a rustic summer-house and skirted it cautiously.

Suddenly, as they did so, they started, and clutch-

ing each other's hand drew back listening. The quick tread of a footstep from behind came on their ears. Going back quickly in the rear of the summer-house, they waited breathlessly. Who could be abroad in that strange situation at this hour? The uncanny nature of the place struck on their hearts with a sudden chill as they stood there, their hearts throbbing loudly.

Again a step came audibly along the gravelly path as they crouched back; then another, yet nearer, accompanied by quick whisperings. The unseen is always more terrifying than the visible, and Rochester and Macpherson, though no cowards, felt a qualm of apprehension seize them as they listened.

In the darkness a shadow passed swiftly, followed by two others. Through the gloom someone appeared to be climbing the wall; and the rending crash of a breaking branch sent their hearts to their mouths.

Then all in a moment their affright had vanished like a breath of steam; and gripping each other's arms, they were shaking with a silent and almost suffocating internal laughter.

"Ugh!" came a rueful voice with the crash of the branch. "Did I fall on you, Cobbe? Gracious! I've nearly broken my back."

"Did you fall on me, you clumsy hippopotamus?" came Cobbe's exasperated voice. "Did a house side fall on me? Besides kicking me in the mouth!"

Johnson's pleasant laugh followed.

"It's the first time I knew that a house side could kick," he declared. "But don't get waxy, old chap—I'm sure Pike didn't mean it."

"Not I," said Pike. "I've stove my ribs far worse than his head, I'll warrant. Though of course I am glad he was there when I fell. I was just seeing what the top branches were like, and if the nectarines grew there any thicker."

An almost unintelligible murmur came from Cobbe; though the purport of it seemed to be that other things besides nectarines grew thicker at the top, Pike being an example with his thick head. Meantime, however, at the whispered disturbance, Sparrow and Whiting, accompanied by Toplady, Pridgitt and Firkin, had hurried up.

"I say, boys," whispered Toplady uneasily, "hadn't we better be off? My conscience, you fellows are kicking up a racket! We've got enough: Sparrow and Whiting have their pockets full, they say; and if we are to divide equally——"

"How many have *you* got?" asked Cobbe sulkily and pointedly.

"Three!" jeered Sparrow; "and Pridgitt two. They don't know where to look; the beggars are as helpless as bats in the daylight."

"I can't find them," declared Pridgitt morosely, "and it is no good saying I can. I'm as sick of it as Toplady; and I keep thinking someone is coming."

"How many have you found, Firkin?" broke off Cobbe.

"Five," replied Firkin.

"Bu[illegible]d!" said Cobbe. "That's better!"

"[illegible] I've eaten them," added Firkin complacently.

A sudden sound, almost like a weird falsetto laugh, came from the rear of the summer-house, and the party started.

"Boys!" whispered Cobbe fearfully. "What was that?"

"Something there; I heard it," murmured Firkin earnestly.

A faint metallic click made them all jump as he spoke; and Pridgitt gave a catching cry for breath. For an instant they stood spellbound. Then with a sudden flash, the blinding ray of a lantern threw their affrighted faces into full view of its terrifying glare.

As it did so, with one wild rush they were off. The crashing of the currant bushes in the centre sounded as though a fox hunt were passing through them. Pike, dashing full against an apple tree in the mad stampede, staggered back for an instant with a bewildered cry; then with a fresh and agile bound he was off at a gallop down the pathway to the right.

Meantime the remainder of the party, spreading itself like the devastating breath of an explosion, trampled onward through the bushes in the wildest panic. Suddenly a shout broke from the outward line of expansion, succeeded by a loud splash and a shriek for help from Pridgitt as he apparently floundered amongst the goldfish in the pool round the fountain. For a moment Toplady could be heard encouraging him as he pluckily stayed to help him forth; then the last sound of their vanishing footsteps faded from hearing, leaving the garden silent as before.

Hastily closing the lantern, by the simple manipulation of which he had produced this remarkable effect on the evil consciences of his friends, Rochester turned to Macpherson with an elate chuckle, and the two waited carefully; but nothing disturbed the solitude of the garden.

Proceeding cautiously forward, they reached the courtyard. The sound of the stampede, it was evident, had not penetrated to the house: through the undraped window which shone into the yard they could see old Carey sitting moodily by the fire.

Passing to the front, a lighted window again greeted them, half hidden by a shutter; but peeping through the crevices they could see the baronet and Farron as they sat drinking together.

Turning away once more they scanned the whole house closely from almost every side, till suddenly a cry broke from Rochester. A bright light shone from a little window high above, half hidden by a corner gable. As they looked, a shadow moved before it; then suddenly it was extinguished, leaving them looking up into the darkness. Who could it be? Not old Carey; not Sir Godfrey Chesswood or his guest, for they had but just seen them. *Who then?*

Their own beating hearts whispered a reply.

(To be continued; commenced in No. 397.)

SYNOPSIS.—CHAPTERS I.—XXX.

A HEARTY reception is given by the boys of Westpool School to Jerry Dodds, a new boy from South Africa, whose father is reputed to be a millionaire. The same evening a fire breaks out in the school. Rochester is sent to the village for help, and on the way meets Sir George Chesswood and the baronet's friends, Farron and Hill, who at once hasten to Dr. Steele's assistance. A moment later Rochester is blindfolded and dragged from the path, but after a whispered, "We've got the wrong boy!" he is released, the assailants mysteriously disappearing. Rochester afterwards mentions the incident to his chum Macpherson and to Jerry, but as nothing further occurs it is forgotten.

On the occasion of a boating trip to Sunday Island, Jerry is lost in a fog, his boat being upset. Unknown to his companions, he is picked up by Hill and Farron, who were cruising in Sir George Chesswood's yacht. He is carried to the baronet's residence, the Priory, and confined in a little room at the top of the building, where old Carey, the valet, looks after him. He is told that he will have to remain there, while people outside think that he's drowned, until they can communicate with his father. Jerry suddenly sees something in Farron's features which makes him start, but he says nothing. Only Rochester believes that he is not drowned. The appearance of the baronet's yacht just after the accident reminded him of the mysterious incident after he met Sir George Chesswood on the night of the fire. Was it merely a coincidence? Hill at once hurries to South Africa, where he succeeds in obtaining a promise of thirty thousand pounds from Mr. Dodds on Jerry's release. He telegraphs that the two are crossing to England at once.

Meanwhile, Rochester has mentioned his doubts of Jerry's death to Macpherson, and they determine to visit the Priory at night to see if they can gather any information. Borrowing a dark bull's-eye lantern from Pompey, the two steal out. Close after, but quite unknown to them, Cobbe, Johnson, Firkin, Pike, Toplady, Pridgitt, and two juniors, Sparrow and Whiting, are soon to follow. These eight have determined also to visit the Priory, intent upon the baronet's neglected nectarines.

"Tommy's" Fondness for Pets.

IT has been said that Jack Tar is unrivalled as a lover of pets, and the statement may be true; but it is certain that Tommy Atkins must run him very close for the honour. However adverse the circumstances in which he is placed, however remote the country in which he is stationed, "Tommy's" friendly spirit must find an outlet, and it is only natural that the dumb creatures round him should usually be the recipients of his affections.

During the war in South Africa the British soldier has found many opportunities of indulging in his favourite pastime of pet-keeping, ostriches having been particular favourites.

In one camp a very fine specimen was dressed in a khaki suit, specially made for the occasion; and the 6th Dragoons, who served under General French in his flying operations which led to the capture of Bloemfontein, made a great fuss of another young bird—the one shown in our photographic illustration. This ostrich was a little too playful—it had an unpleasant habit of stampeding the British horses, and finally an order was given for it to be shot.

PETS OF THE 6TH DRAGOONS.
(Photo: Major Dauncey.)

The 6th Dragoons were also the proud possessors of a donkey, which they looted from a rebel farmer. "Moses," as he was dubbed, used to carry the cook every day from camp to the well for water. He is also shown in our picture, and is undoubtedly a credit to his keepers.

Of course, apart from what may be termed pet-making on the spot, several regiments took to the front from their previous stations the pets which are always attached to their colours. One or two of the Australian contingents were accompanied by dogs, while, as is well known, considerable astonishment was caused at the fall of Bloemfontein by the appearance of the goat belonging to the Welsh Regiment, which marched sedately into the city at the head of its corps.

Brought Home.

TRIFLES are ever leading to unexpected results, and an experience of a certain musician affords a further instance of the value of noticing little things. The musician in question owned an ebony flute with silver keys. He valued it highly, but as one of the upper notes was defective he seldom used it.

A young man lodged with the musician, and between the two a close friendship existed. One night the ebony flute disappeared, having, no doubt, been stolen. Suspicion fell on several persons, but nothing could be proved against any of them. Not long afterwards the lodger went to live in a town a few miles off, but as the friendship between the two men still existed they occasionally visited each other.

Nearly a year afterwards the musician paid his friend a visit, and was pleased to find him in possession of a beautiful bullfinch, which could distinctly whistle three tunes. The performance was perfect, with the exception that whenever he came to one high note he invariably skipped it, and went on to the next.

A little reflection convinced the musician that the note in which the bullfinch was imperfect was the deficient one on his lost flute. So convinced was he that he questioned his ex-lodger on the subject.

The latter at once tremblingly confessed his guilt, and added that all the bird knew had been taught to him on the stolen instrument.

"WHERE do you board now?" asked the white draught of his black neighbour.

"I've been moving round considerably of late," was the reply; "but at present I am stopping in the next square to you."

WRECKERS ABOARD THE LIGHTSHIP.

A Race Against Time at Midnight.

"WELL, here's Captain Finch, gentlemen; but he'll only tell you what you've heard already. By order of Trinity 'Ouse, visitors ain't allowed to spend the night aboard lightships without special leave. That's so, ain't it, captain?"

Captain Finch looked up from the account book at which he had been working, and glanced keenly at the two visitors who, escorted by the speaker, had just entered the cabin. One was a biggish man with a beard; the other a short, clumsy-looking fellow; and both were evidently foreigners.

The big man took off his cap, and made an elaborate bow.

"Good evening, sair," he said. "Me and mein friends, ve are mooch interested in ze lightships. Derefore ve ask you to be so goot——"

"There are a couple more of these gents on deck, sir," broke in Bolton unceremoniously. "They've sailed over from St. Martin's and want to spend the night on board; but I've told 'em that's quite out of the question."

"Ve thought that berhaps——"

"Very sorry, gentlemen," said Captain Finch, nodding abruptly in answer to another elaborate bow. "Orders are orders, and all we can do is to show you over the ship. When you've seen what there is to be seen I'm afraid you'll have to sail back to St. Martin's, and you mustn't be long either, 'cause it's not over safe on a dark night near the banks. Perhaps you'll have some refreshments now you're down here, after your trip? Get some glasses out, Bolton. I'm afraid I can't offer you very much; but there's a cake my missus sent over to me the other day, and she generally makes pretty good ones." He went to the locker to get the cake, and uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"What's the matter, sir?" said Bolton.

"Matter? Why, it looks very much as if someone's been taking a big chunk out of this—there's a quarter of it gone since yesterday. There ain't any mice about, are there?"

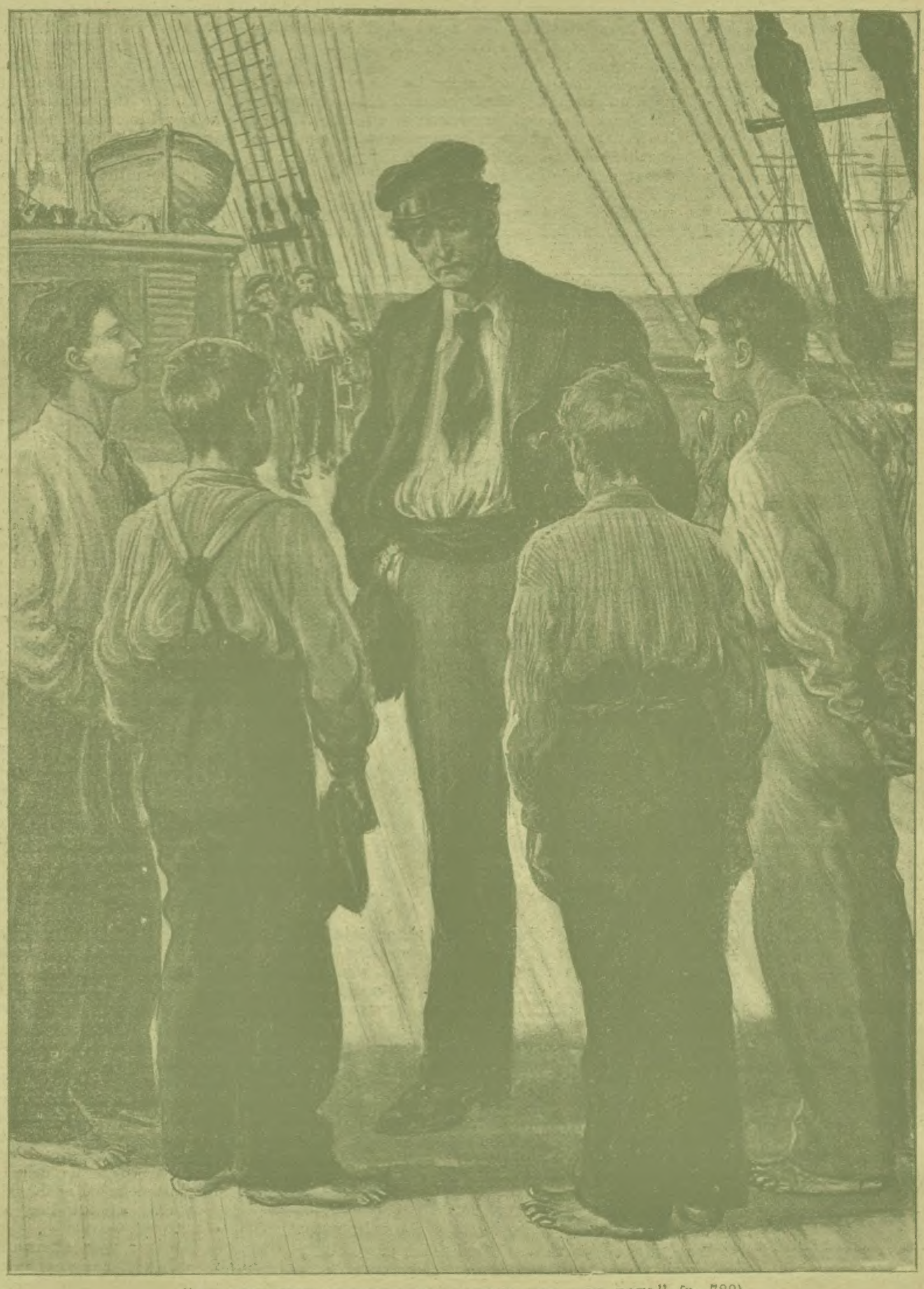
"Don't think so, sir," said Bolton. "I reckon it's probably the cat, she's been turning reg'lar kleptymaniac lately. I fancy I heard her scuttle down under the table when we come in first; I thought she must have been up to some mischief." He bent down to look under the table, and was just lifting up the cloth when the captain stopped him.

"Never mind, Bolton," he said hastily, "let the poor thing be." The skipper's weakness for his cat was notorious throughout the lightship. "Just fill these gentlemen's glasses, and when they've finished bring 'em up on deck. They'll excuse me, I'm sure, while I'm looking after the lighting up."

"Vait a minute, captain," said the big man, a trifle uneasily; "ve'd like to see also, please. Dere is not mooch hurry, eh? Von leetle minute——"

Before he had finished speaking, a peculiar whistle sounded on deck. With a cry of satisfaction, the two visitors sprang to their feet, and, to their surprise and dismay, Captain Finch and Bolton found themselves facing the glistening muzzles of two revolvers!

For a second or two they stood motionless and dumbfounded. Then Captain Finch made some slight movement; and instantly the big man broke the silence.



"SIR FREDERICK DENSTONE INTERVIEWED THE FOUR BOYS" (p. 789).

"Keep quite still, zhentlemen," he said, "zen ve vill not hurt you. If you resist——"

"Ve shoot you dead," put in the second stranger.

"B—but what's the meaning of this?" the captain asked, dazed and angry. "If it's thieving you're after, a lightship ain't the best place from a burgling point of view, I can tell you; so you may just as well put down those shooting things, and let us get on with our work—which is seeing that the lights are kept properly, to warn vessels where the banks lie. Do you understand?"

The two men laughed.

"Yes, ve understand; but you don't," said one. "Ve're masters here now; and dose lights are not going to be lit to-night. Ve have goot reasons, eh, Jan? It is no use to resist; ze other sailors are mit our friends. Now, hands up; and march."

"But the lights—the lights," said the captain. "What's the meaning of it? Do you know it may mean wreck——"

"March," shouted the big man angrily. For a second the captain and Bolton hesitated; then, seeing that resistance was useless, they turned toward the door of the cabin and went up on deck, closely followed by their captors.

II.

THEY had not been gone many minutes when the table-cloth, under which Bolton had expected to find the cat, was thrust aside; and a boy crawled out from beneath the table. Clutched in one of his fists was a fragment of the captain's cake.

"Lucky I slipped under the table when the skipper came in," he said to himself. "I reckon I'm the only free man aboard this ship." He glanced through the port-hole. The boat in which the visitors had sailed over from St. Martin's was still alongside, and, for the first time in many years, the light was not shining out over the darkening sea. What could it all mean?

Suddenly a terrible thought flashed through his mind. The men were foreigners; the transport *Saracen* was due to pass the banks during the night—and the lives of all the men on board her depended upon him!

The boat in which the visitors had come was far too big for him to manage single-handed. Nearly half a mile from the lightship a spur of land—or sand, rather—ran out into the sea; young Gibson was a good swimmer, and might possibly reach it; but even then there was no house for two miles. In the meantime—well, it was his only chance, and he had to take it—he slipped out of his clothes, rubbed oil into his skin to keep out the cold (luckily the night was fairly warm), put on his underclothes again, and tied a life-belt round him. Then he stole cautiously [illegible] could just on deck. He [illegible] forms of make out th[illegible] at the four foreign[illegible] the further end of the vessel, guarding a deck-house in which the captain and crew of the lightship were evidently confined. Awaiting his time, he managed to slip unobserved into their boat, and thence into the sea.

It would have been a good swim on a bright summer's day; on that dark autumn night it seemed endless, and again and again Gibson felt that he must give up the struggle to reach the shore. But each time the thought of what depended on him gave him fresh courage; and by pegging away, and changing from breast to back, he managed at last, half numb with cold and half dead with exhaustion, to reach the spit of sand. He fought his way through the breakers, and then struggled through the coarse grass and shifting sand, until his legs gave way under him. He lay there gasping for a

minute or two; then suddenly a light twinkled out ahead of him; and he sp nt all the breath he had left in a cry for help.

The cry brought a couple of boys out of the darkness to Gibson's aid.

III.

It was a lucky thing for a good many people that the members of the Northbrook Lads' Brigade happened to be camping out where they were. A kettle was singing away over their camp-fire; and while they were making hot tea for Gibson, and helping him into dry clothes, he told them his story. He had scarcely finished it before three of the fellows were rushing off to the village for help.

"Tell 'em to bring guns with 'em," someone shouted. "We'd better get the boat ready; come along, some of you chaps."

Several boys ran down to the shore where their boat was lying; but they were back again the next minute.

"There's a ship's lights out at sea," they shouted. "What on earth can we do? It'll be the best part of an hour before they're back from the village with help; and we can't tackle those rascals without firearms."

"She may not come near the banks," said someone.

"Most likely she will," another answered. "The coast bends round so that vessels have to take their course from the light. Two chances to one she'll get on the banks. What on earth can we do?"

For a minute there was silence.

"I have it," said one of the boys at last. "We'll have to jolly well turn our old boat into a lightship. The vessel's a good way off as yet. We ought to get near her in time, if we pull like niggers. Bring down as much wood and paper as you can——"

"And the tin of methylated spirit," said another boy.

"And the tar," said another.

"Good!" said the first. "We'll give them a light to equal the Eddystone. Who'd better go? You're a good oar, Dick; so's Everett; I'll make a third, and——"

"I a fourth," said Gibson. "I want something to warm me up."

"Right you are, then," said Marson, the boy who seemed to take the lead. "We'd better slip coats and boots and socks off; we shall have to pull like one o'clock, and we'll soon get hot over it. All ready? Well, run her down into the water."

The boat was rushed down the sand and through the breakers; the last boy sprang in, and soon she was making rapid progress in the direction of the light.

"Better pull out beyond the lightship, and then turn," said Gibson, who knew the channel perfectly, as soon as the form of the lightship loomed out in the darkness. "That's it—now we can rest on our oars a bit. Is everything ready?"

The boys soaked paper and wood in tar and spirit.

"Yes, everything's ready."

"Right you are, then. When I give the word, light your bonfires and chuck them overboard to leeward."

They waited a minute or two; the ship's lights grew bigger, and the form of the vessel could just be discerned, not many hundreds of yards away.

"Now," said Gibson.

Three matches flickered in the darkness, and blazing heaps of wood and paper floated on the sea.

"D'you think she sees them?" Marson whispered.

"Look out—we'll get run down if we aren't careful."

"It's all right, they're getting ready to lower a boat," said Everett. "Better yell to them to come armed, hadn't we?"

A few minutes later, before ever the ship could lay to, a boat-load of excited men were pulling towards the bonfires. A few hurried words explained the situation, and the boats made in company for the lightship. Unfortunately, they were just too late to trap the wreckers, who had seen the signals, and decamped in time; though whether they got clean away, or perished on the banks, was never known.

Captain Finch and his men were soon released; and before very long the light was flashing out once more across the waters. The men from the *Satsuma*—which wasn't a transport at all, but a magnificent yacht belonging to Sir Frederick Denstone—paid a visit to the captain's cabin, and finished off, among other good things, the cake which figured in the first part of this story, before they took their leave.

"Well, good-bye, captain," said the officer in command at last, "we must be getting back to the yacht. You lads had better come back with us; Sir Frederick will want to see you, and hear you tell your story. You'll spare young Gibson for an hour or two, captain?"

But Captain Finch had to spare Gibson for more than an hour or two, owing to that night's adventure. In the grey morning light Sir Frederick Denstone interviewed the four boys, coatless and barefooted as they were. To Marson, Everett and Nicholls he gave handsome presents; but Gibson was invited to join the crew of the *Satsuma* on terms which made his mouth water.

"But mind," said Sir Frederick, "you must leave cake-snatching to the cat, in this vessel. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir, I'll promise you that," said Gibson laughing, for he caught a twinkle in his future master's eye.

LUCIAN SORREL.

Objected to Worry.

A CERTAIN celebrated bishop had the greatest possible aversion to answering questions. One day a tailor said to him, when he had been summoned to take the bishop's measurements:

"What are your lordship's orders?"

"I want a suit of clothes."

"Here is a very nice cloth, my lord."

"Ah!"

"And this is likewise a very good one."

"Yes."

"Here is another of excellent quality."

"Very."

"Which material will your lordship like uo decide upon?"

"I want a suit of clothes!"

And that was all the answer the tailor was able to get.

When the new gardener accosted him as he was walking, book in hand, in the garden, to ask, "How will your lordship have this border laid out?" there was no answer.

"How will your lordship be pleased to have this border laid out?" was the next attempt.

Still there was no reply; but when the question was put for third time the answer came:

"You are the gardener, I believe, and I am the bishop!"

Thus the Lion is Tamed.

"To be properly tamed," said the head of a large menagerie, "the lion has to be taken in hand when young."

The first lesson the young animal is taught (he continued) is to respect his tamer. This is done by the tamer entering the lion's cage and sitting there for an hour or two every day, the length of time taken being according to the disposition of the lion; for lions vary as much as human beings: some are soon made docile and obedient, others continue surly and treacherous after years of training.

As a rule, when the trainer steps into the cage, the young lion becomes excited and alarmed, and springs at the intruder. He is, however, beaten off with a light club, and this continues until he understands that it is not only useless but painful to attack man, after which he retires sullenly to the end of his cage, and the trainer sits down on a stool or chair, taking little apparent notice of the animal.

When at last the lion has become accustomed to a man in his cage, the trainer takes a tempting lump of meat and offers it at the end of a stick. Generally little Leo rejects it scornfully, but after a time he takes it, though not very gratefully. Gradually his reserve is broken down, until at last he will receive his food from the trainer's hand and allow himself to be stroked.

At this stage a chain is put round his neck, and the trainer leads him about the cage, occasionally chaining him down to the floor, thus giving him another lesson in man's superiority to the lion. The different tricks which a performing lion is supposed to know are then taught him one by one until his education is complete.

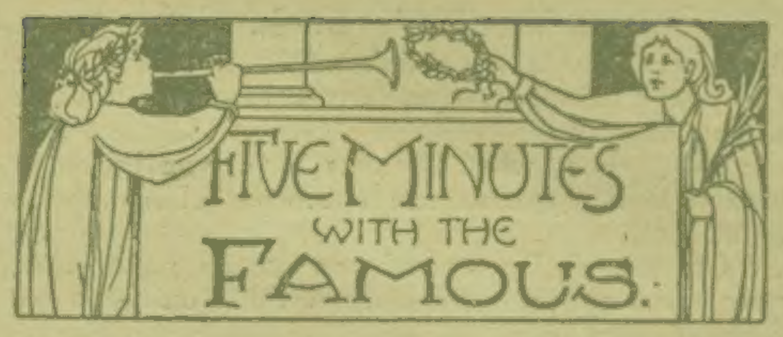
FIRST YOUTH (having borrowed two shillings): "Oh, thank you! Words cannot repay you for this favour."

Second Youth (drily): "No, I don't think they can!"

RISING YOUNG AUTHOR (angrily): "Bother these autograph fiends; they make me mad."

Friend: "Why, you haven't had a request for your autograph for a month."

Rising Young Author (still more angrily): "That's just what I'm complaining about!"



THE young German Princes are very fond of cycling, and the elder boys used to make long excursions from Ploen, where they were at school, on their machines. Cycling tracks have been laid down for their use in the grounds at Potsdam.

—*—

TOM HEARNE, the cricket celebrity who recently died, was once on the point of bowling when he saw a pigeon flying at some distance over his head. He flung the cricket-ball at the bird, and it dropped dead almost at his feet. He had the unfortunate pigeon stuffed, and kept it as a curiosity.

—*—

MR. THOMAS A. EDISON, the famous inventor, manages with very little sleep; but his men are not so fond of foregoing their night's rest; and, when he was working on the incandescent light, Mr. Edison was obliged to hire a brass band to play in the laboratory to keep them awake.

—*—

MR. WILLIAM CROSS, the great naturalist and animal importer, who died recently, brought over the first gorilla ever seen in Europe, and sold it for a thousand pounds. He sold Madame Sarah Bernhardt, the great actress, her famous tamed tigers; and for some time he had a training school for elephants, lions, monkeys, and other animals.

—*—

MR. RUDYARD KIPLING, when he first went to Westward Ho! found that the other boys made a butt of him, owing to his precocity and eccentric habits. However, in spite of his bad sight and the fact that he was not very strong, he was determined not to be "sat on," and soon gave masters and boys good proof of this fact. Even then he was fond of writing, and, it is said, was often smeared with ink.

—*—

WHEN Mr. Onslow Ford, R.A., the famous sculptor, was eighteen, he went to Antwerp and learnt drawing curved and straight lines among three hundred children, he being the only "grown-up." However, he soon got beyond that particular class, though one of his masters told him gravely that he had no artistic capacity. Fortunately, Mr. Ford persevered in his studies, and eventually, after much work, quite justified his belief in his own powers.

—*—

"A LEMON-PEEL fight," with the fragments of lemon supplied with their pancakes on Shrove Tuesdays, used to be a great institution among Charterhouse boys. On one occasion the two sides were drawn up, waiting to commence the fray, when a figure swathed from head to foot in padding charged, with a fearsome war-whoop, between them. Then, squatting on the grass, the new-comer gave the order for the battle to begin. It was only "B.-P.," the future hero of Mafeking, and the leader, in old Carthusian days, of so many pranks.

—*—

IN his very early days, Mr. Felix Moscheles, the artist, knew Lablache, the great singer. Lablache was great in more ways than one, for he was enormously stout, and Mr. Moscheles recollects walking round him for a kind of constitutional. Once he heard a hackney coachman ask Lablache whether he expected to be taken for a drive in one lot, or in instalments! By the way, the boy who figures in Mr. Moscheles' well-known "Drink" picture was picked up at Victoria Station: he was a regular little vagabond, uncombed and untamed, with his cap over his ear and a cigar-stump in his mouth. Browning, the poet, was present in the studio on his last birthday while the little model was being painted.

"WORK" OF PRICELESS BENEFIT.

SIR,—I have taken in WORK regularly from No. 17, and when I first commenced I was apprenticed to a firm as a colliery blacksmith, but thanks to the numerous able articles which have appeared, and are still appearing, I have read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested those appertaining to the different branches of engineering and electrical work, until I have for over five years been employed as colliery engine-wright, having the full oversight and management of the extensive machinery, pumps, locomotives, etc., usual to modern collieries, thus considerably improving my position socially and pecuniarily as well. I can thoroughly recommend WORK to any young aspirant for engineering honours, as articles of priceless benefit to mechanics, etc., are constantly appearing in its pages.—S. C. (*Flockton.*)

WORK is published every Friday, price One Penny. CASSELL AND COMPANY, Limited: and all Booksellers.

Wouldn't Look.

Some boys were trespassing in a field, and thoroughly enjoying a game, when a farmer came up to them saying angrily:

"Now, then, what business have you to be in here? Didn't you see the notice posted up at the gate?"

"Oh, yes, sir," answered one of the youngsters, "we saw a notice, but it had 'private' on it, so we didn't like to look."

WHAT HAPPENED TO ST. MARGARET'S.

Merryweather Wipes Out an Insult.

"WHERE is Peck?" demanded Merryweather, of Garport School, fiercely. "I want him to see me. If he can remain neutral after this, he is no friend of mine."

Merryweather's face as he spoke was one calculated to appeal immediately to an onlooker. His left eye was rapidly closing from an unsightly swelling of the lower lid, while at the same moment, with his handkerchief, he mopped busily at his bleeding nose.

The explanation of his appearance was the usual one: the lower forms of Garport School and St. Margaret's College had again been meeting. It did indeed seem strange that while the senior forms of the two adjacent schools should come together so frequently in friendly competitions of skill, both cricket and football, the lower forms should never meet apparently for anything but the most disgraceful rowdyism.

To such a scandal, in fact, had this juvenile antagonism grown, as to seriously engage the attention of the principals of both schools; and a second eleven cricket match had at length been arranged between them with the object of creating a better feeling.

It hardly seemed to have had good results as yet. Here was Merryweather, four days after the match had been announced, presenting himself with a black eye and bleeding nose; while some three or four of his companions seemed to have fared little better.

"Where is Peck?" he demanded again.

Peck indeed was the one pupil amongst the juniors in Garport School who escaped the unpleasant state of things which existed. Formerly he had himself been a pupil of St. Margaret's, having been transferred to Garport School by his father owing to the numerous unpleasant incidents connected with his stay at the former academy. He was therefore well acquainted with the pupils of either school, and had sensibly agreed to remain neutral; especially as his cousin, Tom Dollinger, was the ringleader of the St. Margaret's juniors.

As Merryweather made the second demand for his friend, who in fact was highly popular, Peck himself came hurrying in with a smile on his face.

"Hullo!" he grinned. "I just met my cousin Tom and a few more St. Margaret's chaps; he said they'd been giving you beans."

"And a lot to boast about, isn't it?" asked Merryweather angrily, "seeing that there were about a dozen of them to five of us. You may laugh, but my opinion is that they are a lot of low cads—your cousin included. I suppose they came round to corner a few of us, just to show there is to be no reconciliation over this cricket match; and I agree with them on that point: a fighting match between two elevens would have been far more sensible. And another thing, Peck: you may grin there as much as you like, but I think that a fellow who remains neutral like you, doesn't show a great amount of loyalty to his own school."

"Eh?" asked Peck, with sudden seriousness. "Why not?"

"A nice thing, isn't it," said Merryweather, "that every time we have a squabble with these fellows, we are one less than we need be, through a fellow who stands aloof, and spouts about neutrality? None of your neutrality for me! I must be on one side or the other; and I can't see that a chap is worth much for his school if he won't fight for its honour, even if it comes to blacking his own cousin's eye."

"Hear, hear!" said Battersby and Gower, who had been in the *mêlée*.

Peck looked around anxiously.

"I don't think relatives ought to fight," he declared. "And then, of course, apart from cousin Tom, how can I go fighting old chums like Duckett and Barker? I don't want to be thought disloyal to the school, but I couldn't do it, really!"

"Then you are no Garportian," said Merryweather; "you might just as well be an outsider for any use you are to the school."

An approving murmur followed Merryweather's words, and Peck eyed the group uneasily.

"Look here, you chaps," he said, "I'm as loyal to the school as anyone; and if it were any other than the St. Margaret's fellows, I'd sail in like one o'clock, and you know it. But anyhow, as I belong to Garport School I tell you what I'll do: I'll put you up to a move, though I won't take part in it. It occurred to me the other day when I heard the cricket match was on, and I thought what a chance there was for you fellows if you only knew how to go about it—ha, ha! it would be a lark, too; I'd like to see how my cousin Tom and the others took it."

"What is it, Peck?" asked Merryweather, grinning as did the bystanders at Peck's sudden elation. "What's the dodge?"

"Something good, eh?" laughed Battersby. "You have stunning ideas, Peck."

"It's a screamer," Peck declared. "Oh, I must put you up to it! But you will have to keep it absolutely dark, and let nothing leak out before the match."

"Trust us for that," said Merryweather. "Mum's the word, and silent as the grave."

Peck nodded as he drew the group closer around him, and sank his voice to a whisper; and Merryweather, holding a piece of cold stone to his damaged eye as he listened, grinned villainously.

II.

The St. Margaret's juniors were inclined to be somewhat cheeky over the second eleven match, even before its commencement; and as the game duly proceeded their noisy jubilation reached a point which almost approached insult, when one considered they were playing on their own ground, the first eleven match, in fact, being played the same afternoon on the Garport School ground. Had the Garport juniors been in their usual frame of mind, or had the two masters who were present been absent, there is grave probability that the friendly meeting would have ended, or been interrupted by a sanguinary encounter of more than usual virulence.

As it was, however, the Garport juniors took their series of misfortunes with strange and philosophical cheerfulness. This satisfactory state of things was probably mostly due to Merryweather.

"Keep it up, you fellows," he whispered after each fresh disaster. "Don't get shirty. Laugh like niggers, and never mind their cackle. Peck says we're to create a good impression, or the masters won't leave us to ourselves after the match. Every dog has his day, and our turn comes next."

The match itself so far as the Garport eleven was concerned, was little better than a procession. Merryweather himself, who accompanied by Peck went in first, and who with his black eye was greeted with derisive shouts of "Black-eyed Susan," had his wickets knocked all abroad by the first delivery of Barker, their crack fast bowler; and Battersby, who followed, only succeeded with Peck's help in scoring three, when both were sent to join their captain amid the triumphant jeers of the home side. Duckett, the best of the St. Margaret's players, added insult to injury by loudly declaring across the field that a rot had set in.

Had it not been for Gower, who gallantly knocked up a plucky seventeen and carried out his bat, the result would have been bad in the extreme, the whole innings indeed closing for twenty-two; or, as Dollinger neatly expressed it—"Gower seventeen; the rest of 'em five; average for the rest of 'em, half a run apiece."

The St. Margaret's innings followed successfully, Dollinger and Duckett knocking off twenty-two before being separated, and the whole innings closing for seventy-three, amid the hilarious glee and triumph of the victors.

It was then that the value of the sound advice given them by Merryweather and Peck became noticeable. With the end of the match, after a brief speech by Mr. Brown of St. Margaret's, they were left alone to dress.

"I am gratified beyond measure," the tutor had said, as he stood before the tent, "to see the lower forms of the two schools united in these friendly exhibitions of skill; and I am specially pleased to note the splendid good humour with which the Garport boys have taken their defeat. I understand that there has been some degree of ill-feeling and bad blood between the juniors of the two schools, but I now view with pleasure the visible dissipation of that regrettable state of things. The match, I am sure, has been an unparalleled success; and I would finally, by way of consolation to the Garport boys, remark that perhaps their opportunity may come later."

Merryweather winked darkly at those around as he listened; and with a final satisfied look around, the two masters strolled schoolward.

III.

As they did so, the workings of Peck's scheme became mysteriously visible to those who were in the secret. One by one the Garport juniors in the tent, hastily completing their dressing, sauntered carelessly forth, assembling about the door and open scoring window, with their companions. Meantime the St. Margaret's group, dressing more leisurely, or sitting triumphant and noisy on the forms within, gradually assumed entire possession of the place, till the two parties again became clearly separated.

"Hullo, you chaps!" laughed Dollinger, "have you had enough of us? You are soon outside."

"We like to pick our company," said Gower. "Fact is, we don't care to associate with anybody."

"Look here, no cheek, Gower," shouted Barker, who was still slightly aggrieved that he had not taken the former's wicket. "'Spose you fancy yourself because you carried your bat out."

"Not much credit to me against poor bowling like yours," replied Gower easily.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Battersby, who lounged near the door, watching Merryweather furtively

"Out of the Frying Pan."

Customer: "This hat I bought from you is much too small. What can I do?" *Hatter:* "I can only suggest that you have your hair cut."

Customer: "I've had my hair cut. Can't you make the hat a little bit smaller?"

as he disappeared round the end of the tent; "how you did slog them, Gower! Pity we couldn't back you up a little; and yet they are crowing as though, instead of by a series of beastly flukes, they had got us out by play."

"So we did," shouted half a dozen angry voices.

"Rot!" said Battersby, as he eagerly watched the end of the tent.

"No; the rot was on your side," laughed Duckett. "Just like it set in the other day, when we gave 'Black-eyed Susan' and a few of you such a lamming."

A burst of delight at the insulting nickname came from the inmates of the tent as they looked around for Merryweather.

"Yes, twelve of you to five of us," shouted Battersby. "Something to brag about, isn't it?"

A brutal laugh from the tent responded; and as it broke forth Merryweather peered round the corner and nodded.

With a sudden movement Battersby sprang to the door of the tent, and drew it to, turning the key. As he did so, Merryweather drew a long coil of hose-pipe, with which the crease was occasionally watered, round the corner.

"Turn on, Price!" he shouted backward. Approaching the scoring window he looked within as the inmates stared in surprise. At the same moment a jet of water began to shoot vigorously from the nozzle of the pipe.

"Yes," said Merryweather, peering within, "twelve to five; and you laugh, eh? A good joke, wasn't it? Well, laugh at this, then; it's far more humorous."

As he spoke he turned the hissing jet full into the tent. Barker, who had just doffed his jersey, gave vent to a noisy "Ow, ow!" as the spray of cold water splashed on his warm skin. Dollinger and Duckett, who with a few others had rushed to the window at the first alarm, next caught it, the former in the eye, the latter in the ear as he dodged wildly aside. In another second, staggering back, they had upset a form on which some five or six players sat dressing, and the whole group more over, backwards. Rolling together on the floor they made a mark that could not be missed; and Merryweather played calmly over them, the water meanwhile rushing forth from beneath the door in a gushing stream.

Then, amidst a final exultant cheer as Merryweather dropped the hose, and knocking away the support from the window shutter, closed them in, the Garport juniors formed up in a compact body that it would have been dangerous to attack, and walked slowly homewards. Twenty yards away they saw the shutter pushed open again, as the wretched inmates, led by Dollinger and Duckett, climbed one by one through the opening; but they were not followed. As he looked, Merryweather smiled happily.

"We've lost the match badly," he remarked complacently, "and it's no use denying it. But this ought to take the conceit out of them"

WHERE THE BANANAS GROW.

But Reptiles Abound in the Plantations.

THE haunt of the old pirates of the Spanish Main, the land of mangrove swamps, of sugar-cane, coffee, ginger, tamarind, yam and banana plantations, and the home of "happy darkies," such is Jamaica, a colony as fertile and fruitful, though, perhaps, hardly as prosperous, as any other of our British possessions in tropical regions.

Our photographic reproduction illustrates a typical Jamaican scene, especially in these days when the cultivation of the sugar-cane has given place, to a large extent, to the growing of oranges and bananas.

It will be observed that the banana carriers in the picture are with one exception all of the gentler sex, which is also very characteristic of Jamaica, where the bulk of the plantation work is done by negro women. The negro gentlemen are, as a rule, busily employed in looking on and explaining how the work should be done; if they *do* condescend occasionally to carry something they may safely be looked for at the rear of the procession, like the man in our illustration.

BANANA-CARRYING IN JAMAICA.
(*Photo: Duperly & Son, Jamaica.*)

As a matter of fact, the coloured folk, whether men or women, are not fond of work, and there certainly is no great occasion for them to toil. With little trouble they can grow all they need in the way of food, and as a result Asiatic coolies are employed in many of the plantations.

Any Chums who meditate becoming West India planters will probably find that orange or banana plantations yield the greatest profit, for there is a large market for both these fruits not only in England, but in the United States. Bananas, in particular, should have great possibilities, for they are a fruit which, of late years, has come into great popular favour.

Fruitful and luxuriant as a banana garden looks in the plucking season, it presents a still more striking picture in its blossoming stage. A soft, fibrous stem, from ten to twenty feet high, with a cluster of immense leaves, from which spring spikes of purple flowers some four feet in length—such is the banana in blossom. Later comes the fruit, in the shape of great bunches of from eight to twelve dozen bananas, weighing 40, 50, or even 60 lbs.

As with most other pleasant things, however, the banana plantation has its disagreeable side. Like the Australian vineyards, it is the favourite haunt of numbers of reptiles, some of them poisonous, and the pickers have to be on the alert.

An American planter who kept pigs and allowed them to pick up a living in his "banana-patch," made the useful discovery that the porker is literally "a caution to snakes," and can keep down the reptile pest as effectually as a cat will exterminate rats. In describing his experiences in this respect, the American gave the following racy description of a combat between piggy and a serpent.

"A wiry little hog of mine was meandering along on the look out for a stray yam, when he caught sight of a snake gliding out from a heap of old fence rails close by. Piggy dropped his eyes immediately, and made believe that he was not taking any particular notice. Then he sidled gently towards the snake and dropped down in front of it, tucking his legs underneath him out of harm's way; and you could almost see him smile as he thought how good the snake would taste after a long course of vegetarian diet!

"The snake took in the situation at once, and struck viciously at the porker without seeming to do him any harm: either his skin was too thick or his fat protected him. Again the snake lunged, but without effect, and piggy waited calmly for his chance. It came very soon in the shape of an incautious movement on the part of his snakeship. Piggy was prompt, and, seizing his enemy by the neck, soon made a meal of it; and I gave him a banana or two by way of dessert!"

In the case of another banana garden, it is said that a whole drove of pigs lived and grew fat on the reptiles that infested the place, but this is a story which one feels inclined to receive with just a little reserve.

Gave His Orders.

THE following story is told of a pompous captain and an old sailor. The latter, a fresh hand, was at the wheel, when the captain asked:

"How's her head?"

"Nor'-by-east," answered the sailor gruffly.

"My man," said the captain, "aboard this craft, when one of the crew speaks to me, he gives me a title of respect. Now—how's her head?"

"Nor'-by-east," was the same reply.

"Give me the wheel," said the captain sharply. "Now, then, ask me the question."

"How's her head?" roared the sailor.

"Nor'-by-east, *sir!*" replied the captain.

"Then keep her so, my man, while I have a smoke," said the old salt, marching away.

It is hardly necessary to add that he was dismissed at the first opportunity.

JONES: "What a lucky fellow you are, Brown! You always seem to catch your train with such ease. You never rush up at the last moment like most of us."

Brown: "You're making a mistake, my dear fellow. My misfortune is really worse. I never catch my proper train. You always see me waiting patiently for the next."

"It Wasn't Spout."

A GENTLEMAN was playing a selection from Spohr one day in his apartments, when the landlady, entering, said:

"Ah! that reminds me of my dear son who used to play the piano."

"Why?" asked the pianist. "What did he play?"

"Oh, summat from the great masters," she returned; "I forget the name."

"Was it from Spohr?" questioned my friend.

"No, it warn't Spohr, and it warn't Spout."

"Was it Handel?" asked my friend.

"Ah, yes!" cried the old lady, brightening up. "I knew it was something to do with a jug!"

Through the Forest Fire.

THE forest fires of America have been so often described that it needs no great imagination to realise the heroism of the engine-driver and stoker, who not long ago drove their engine through a burning forest to save a number of people who had been hemmed in by the flames.

The story is a thrilling one. Hearing of the deadly peril of some twenty women and children at a place along the route of the line, the engine-driver, who bears the historic name of Nelson, determined to go to the rescue.

He detached from his engine every carriage except one, and then went full speed into the flaming forest.

The imprisoned victims were found in a water-hole beside the line surrounded by blazing pines. Quickly they were packed into the car, which was drenched with water from the trench, and then the train started on its desperate journey back.

The heat was frightful. The sleepers or ties were scorched and charred, the steel rails were beginning to warp, and the paint and varnish of the engine and the car began to melt and peel off. But the engine-driver stood stern and determined at the throttle of his engine, as it jumped and lurched forward, while the stoker worked like a Trojan to keep the steam up, and at the same time to "douse" buckets of water from the tank in the tender over himself and the driver.

More than once it seemed as though they would never get through, but they held to their post like the heroes they were, and at last the fire was outstripped, and the train and its freight placed in safety.

Such a Joke.

MR. EARLIE was out watering his grass when one of his neighbours, Mr. Funnie, came along and stepped on the hose. The former turned round to see what had shut off the water so suddenly, and Mr. Funnie laughed at him.

"Get off that hose!" exclaimed Mr. Earlie.

"Oh, don't mind me," said Mr. Funnie. "Go on and water your grass."

Then he noticed that the nozzle was carelessly pointed in his direction.

"Here! Point that the other way!" he cried.

Mr. Earlie glanced down at the nozzle, and his face lit up with pleasure.

"I say," said the joker, "if you'll turn that the other way I'll get off."

"Oh, I wouldn't put you to so much trouble," was the reply. "Enjoy yourself."

Mr. Earlie held the nozzle between his knees while he took out a cigar and lit it. The funny man watched him puff for a moment. Then he said:

"Look here, I say, my leg's getting stiff."

"Why don't you shift legs?" asked Mr. Earlie disinterestedly.

Mr. Funnie tried it, made a slip, and the stream almost reached him before he could get his foot on the hose again. The other chuckled.

"I'll break your head!" cried the joker excitedly.

"All right," returned Mr. Earlie, carelessly. "But be careful, or you may slip off the hose again."

Mr. Funnie tried to walk along the hose to get farther away from the nozzle, but the water spurted out a little with each step, and he stopped. Then he got desperate, stepped off, and started to run. The stream caught him in the middle of the back. When he got out of range he turned and shook his fist at the impassive figure with the hose, and uttered some terrible threats.

And Mr. Earlie muttered as he began watering the grass again:

"Funny that a funny man can't take a joke himself."

Atoned For.

SOME time ago there stood in a certain Continental town a tall building which was used as a college chapel. Up from the roof of the high chapel was a still higher tower. One morning the students awoke to find the effigy of a man hanging from the front of the chapel. The effigy was suspended about fifty feet from the ground, and represented the head of the college.

One of the assistant masters, seeing a crowd of students whispering and nodding their heads knowingly, inquired of them the cause; and to his dismay the ridiculous-looking figure was pointed out to him.

The hour for the head's arrival was at hand, and there seemed to be no way to reach the hideous object in mid-air; but a thrilling scene was at that moment enacted.

"Look!" said a student, and those on the ground, raising their eyes, saw a student emerge from a trap-door in the top of the belfry. In spite of the shouts of the spectators, who cried "Go back!" the bold youth drew off his shoes and coat, and let his body down to the slats in the belfry.

He seemed to hesitate, and then, thrusting his toes and fingers between the slats, he thus descended to the roof, many feet below. With steady steps, he walked along the ridge of the roof, and, reaching the end, cut the rope that held the effigy, which fell with a crash to the ground.

But the task of the daring climber was not half through. He hesitated when he reached the belfry slats, and it was evident to the spectators that his nerves were failing him. When half-way up, he turned and descended again to the roof. Then he crawled round to the back of the belfry, and entered it through an opening of which none but himself knew.

The mystery was solved. The youth who had put the effigy there was the one who had taken it down. But he had atoned for his offence, and nothing was ever said to him by the college authorities about it.

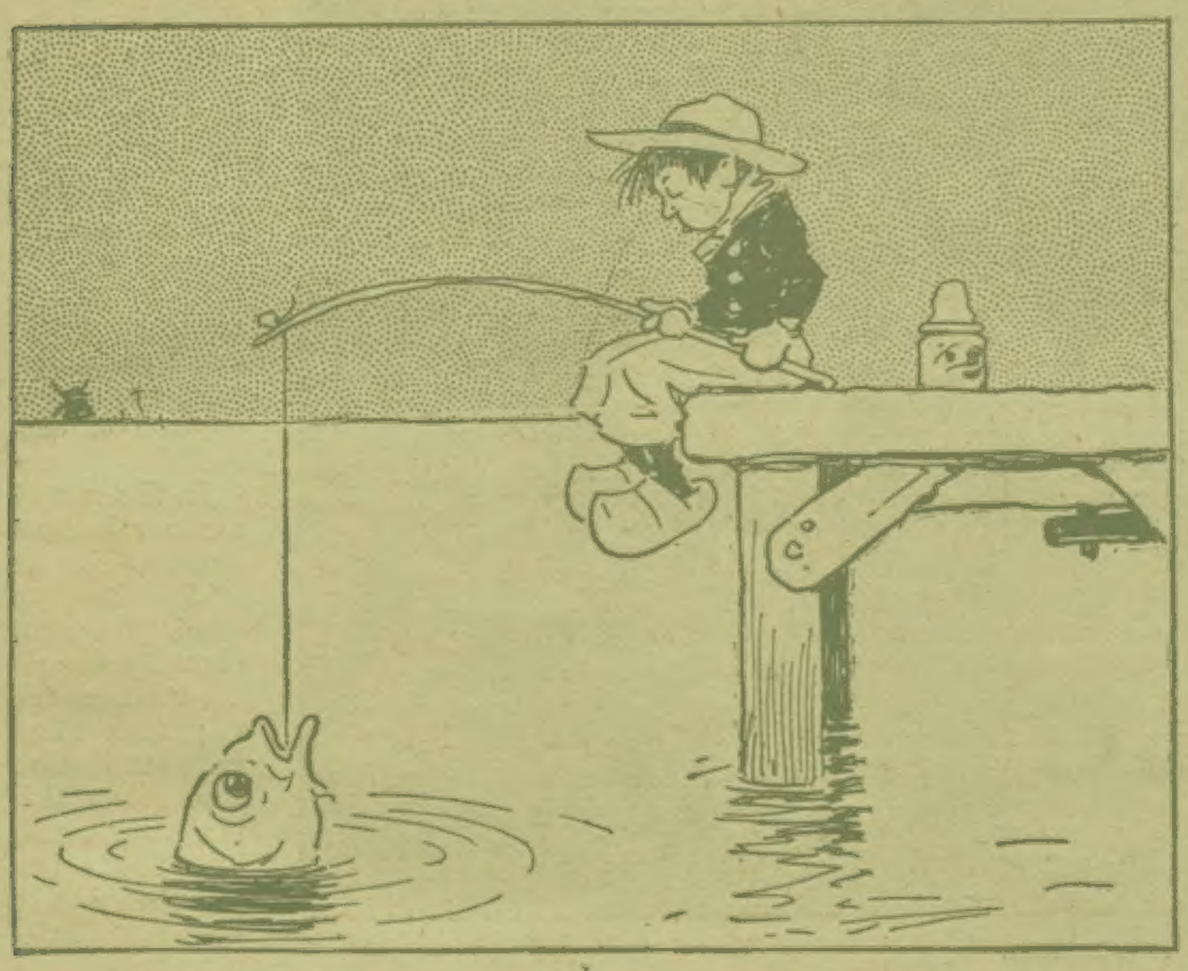
NEW CONSTABLE: "I searched the prisoner, yer worship."

Magistrate: "Well, what did you find on him?"

New Constable: "Only a black eye, yer worship."

A BOY who read in the paper that "if people would adopt the fashion of keeping boots on trees they would get ten times the wear out of them," has lost faith in newspaper recipes. He hung his boots on a tree in the yard that very night, and next morning they were missing.

Table Turning; or, Did He Dream?



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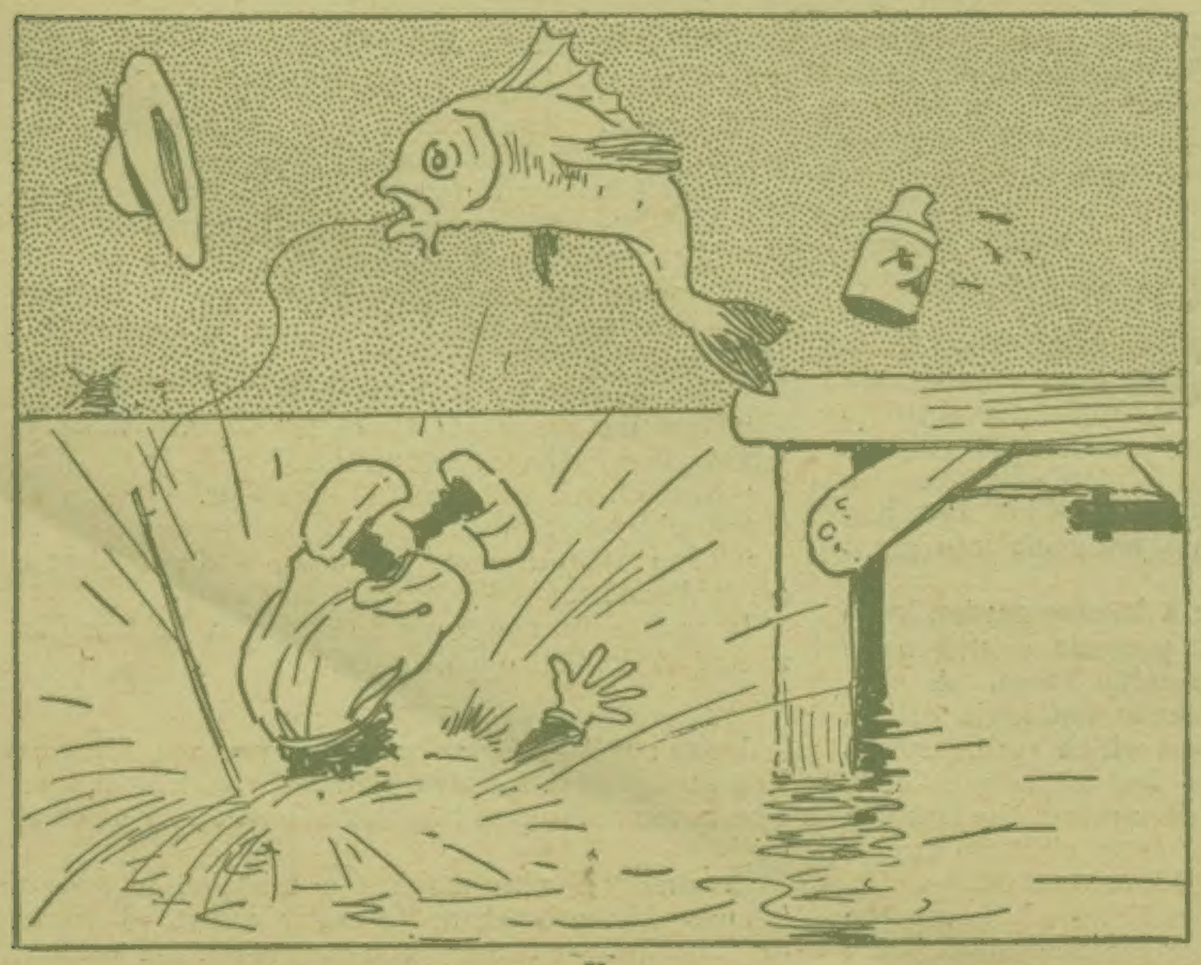

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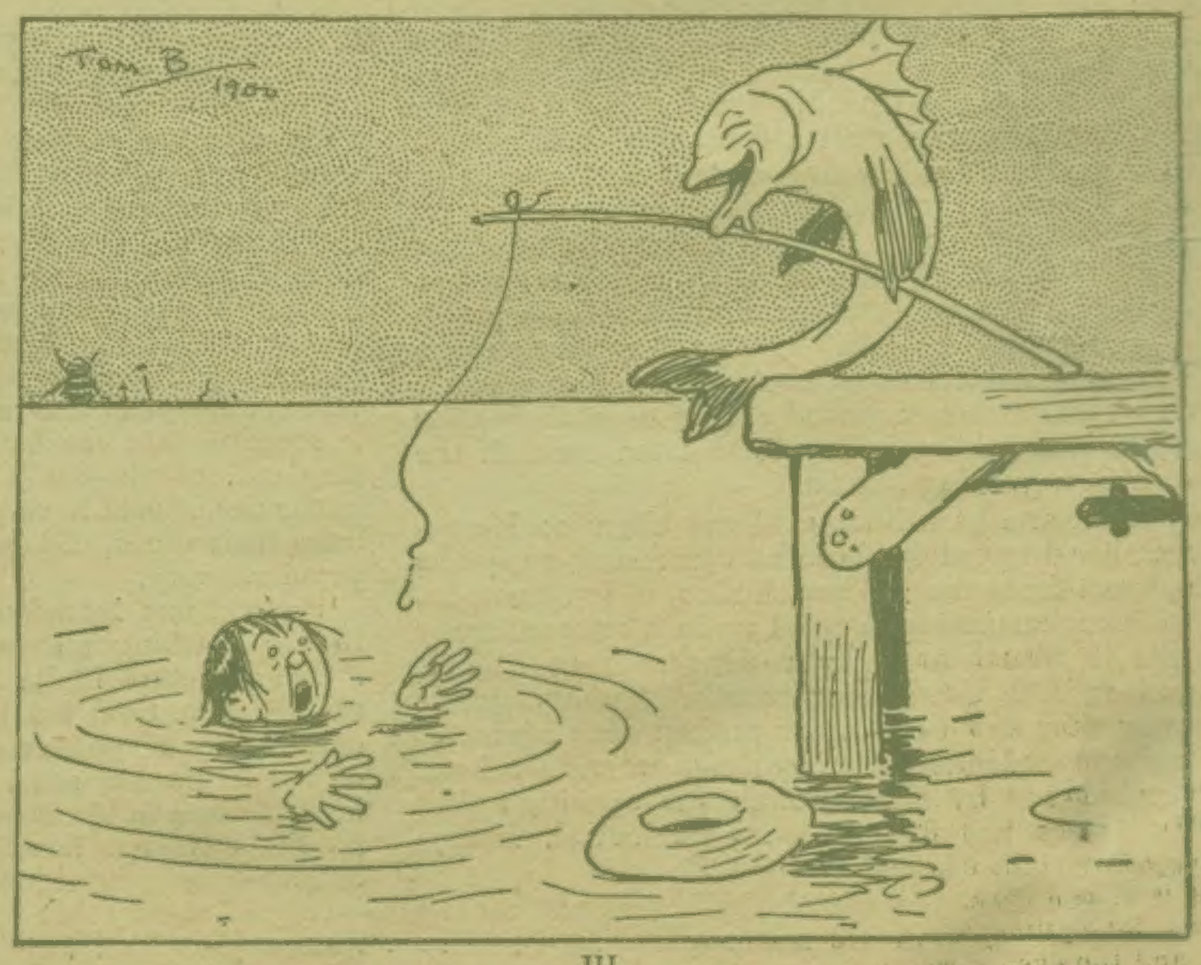


III.

FOUGHT OUT AT THE FRONT.

Being a Written Account of a Terrible Chapter in the Life of Jack Scarlett, and the Adventures and Misadventures which befel him in the Troublous Times of the South African War of 1899 and 1900.

By E. C. HEATH HOSKEN,

AUTHOR OF "BROKEN THREADS," "FOXE OF CAIUS," ETC. ETC.

SYNOPSIS—CHAPTERS I.–XXVIII.

JACK SCARLETT is suddenly dispatched by his uncle, Phineas Baldwin, to Durban to deliver a sealed letter to Meinheer Van Kock, and on reaching there is directed to the Dutchman by "Bull-frog," a repulsive little Zulu. Van Kock hastens with Jack to Ladysmith, where during the night "Bull-frog" makes an attempt with a knife on the latter's life. Believing that the sinister-looking Dutchman is implicated, Jack flies from the place, meeting, by good fortune, his old school chum, Gilly Morant, whose brother Dick is in the Dublin Fusiliers under Sir George White. At Moutifontein, Gilly's home, Sir Humphrey Morant makes Jack welcome, and while the two chums are out riding, they meet a party of Boers, among whom is Van Kock.

The lads are chased, but manage to escape, and also wound the Dutchman, who cries out that Jack must be killed or captured, as he is a most dangerous enemy of the Republic. Jujube, Gilly's Basuto servant, overhears the Boers discussing the attack of Moutifontein, and Jack, with Jujube as guide, voluntarily rides off to Dundee for help.

General Symons sends a detachment of the Dublin Fusiliers in an armoured train, but within a few miles of Moutifontein, a big boulder on the rails nearly upsets the front truck. Just as the obstruction is cleared the Boers attack, and a shell wrecks part of the train, compelling the British to retreat. Jack refuses to go back, and the train is stopped to allow him and Jujube to return to Moutifontein. "Bull-frog" makes a further attempt on Jack's life, but gets nearly strangled. When near their destination a Boer party, including Van Kock, is seen riding towards the homestead, which immediately afterwards bursts into flames. The Morants escape in a train, and thanks to a brilliant ride by Jack, they avoid running into the overturned truck.

Sir Humphrey and Lady Morant go on to Ladysmith, leaving Gilly and Jack at Dundee, where Dick, under General Symons, is then stationed. Dick takes the two chums with him one evening, scouting; and during a brush with the Boers, Gilly is hit. Jack rides back to him, gets Gilly on his horse, which gallops off, leaving Jack behind. He is taken prisoner and carried the next day to Danhauser, a town filled with Boers, where he is left to himself. While standing hidden by a waggon, he sees Van Kock ride in, and overhears him say that the boy (meaning Jack) slipped through his fingers at Ladysmith, but that now "Bull-frog" was in Dundee camp, and could be relied upon to do his work. Jack flies towards the open country, where he meets the British, and is restored to his friends in Dundee. Dick invites the two chums to witness an attack upon the Boers, and just after the cry "fall in" is heard, the battle of Glencoe commences.

"I TURNED AND STARED AT THE WRETCHED MAN" (p. 794).

CHAPTER XXIX.

GLENCOE.

AND the battle commenced in deadly earnest too, for the Boer artillery was not to go unchallenged for long. The British gunners had thundered out of the camp to the east, unlimbered, and were barking away right merrily. And their guns had a bite as well as a bark.

It was an artillery duel, which lasted but half an hour; and the enemy was the first to stop

The Boers and Free-Staters were in large force at the top of Smith's, or Dundee Hill, a little to the north-east of Craigside camp, and their guns commanded the whole of the Dundee valley. But they were silent now, for a time, at any rate.

"Come on, Jack and Gill, if you want to see any fun," shouted Lieutenant Dick Morant, as he buckled on his sword and tightened his puttees. "There's no time for shaving this morning, I can tell you."

He had just been ordered out with his mounted detachment, who were accompanying the Hussars.

And we needed little encouragement.

"Someone will have to take that hill, if I am not much mistaken," said the major calmly, as he lit a cigar and took a look through his binoculars at the artillery practice.

The 2nd Battalion of the Dublin Fusiliers—"Fighting Devils," as they were rightly called—were standing stiffly at attention, numbering and taking up their dressing. Men gripped their Lee-Metfords and examined them lovingly. They would soon depend upon their trusty rifles for their lives, and it was just as well to see that they were all right before it was too late.

Sergeants and corporals were bustling hither and thither, and subalterns were taking their places with their sections and companies.

"I'm sorry I'm not coming your way to-day, major," said Dick, as he drew his sword and fell in with the mounted men. "Look after those youngsters, if you've got time."

"The youngsters had better fall in with the rear company and the fourth section, if they intend to tempt Providence and come with us," said the major grimly. "Though Heaven protect them and me if anything goes wrong."

I don't know what Gilly was thinking about at that moment, that supreme moment in my life; but I do know that from the instant I took my dressing with those grim-faced, bronzed, and unshaven soldier boys I went mad—mad with the fierce fever of battle.

The din of that artillery intoxicated me; I felt that I loved the sound of those whistling, shrieking messengers of death that were cleaving the air above us and on all sides of us as we stood there awaiting the order to advance.

A major of staff galloped up to our colonel, who was mounted on his little black Arab, said a few words, and then dashed away to the Royal Irish lines. I remember seeing a shell burst within a couple of yards of him as he cantered away; but he went on apparently uninjured, though the explosion killed a Zulu boy three yards further away than he was. It was one of the strokes of luck that come to a soldier, and for which there is no accounting.

And the shells were flying fast now, for the Boer guns had re-opened.

The King's Royal Rifles were off. I could see them doubling away to the east; and the 1st Battalion of the Royal Irish Fusiliers were following close behind them. Evidently Ireland was to have the honour of this day's work.

The colonel turned in his saddle and spoke to the major.

A bugle rang out above the din. Men knew what it meant; and caught their breath. Inaction was over.

"'*Shun! Form fours! By your right—quick mar-r-r-rch!*"

The lines of khaki and steel moved forward. We were off—off on a journey which for some was to be a very long one, and for others a journey which had no return.

But we did not think of that then.

That hill was before us, spitting out fire and death and molten lead. And that hill, every man Jack of us knew, we had to take or die.

Out of the camp we swung, shoulder to shoulder, a solid compact heart of men, ready and willing to sacrifice themselves for their Queen and country, to charge into the jaws of death at the word of command from their officers. And it required a little nerve to look into the face of those flying, shrieking shells, and the hail of bullets which cut up the dry, dusty grass, like a torrent of tropical rain might cut up a sheet of water.

Gilly and I marched side by side, and I verily believe that neither of us at that moment had a single thought of the terrible peril we were facing.

Many a civilian soldier marched with the firing line that day and fought well too. Whether Gilly or I did much good, I do not know; but I do know that we tried our level best to do our share of the work when it came to it; and, what was more, we

both of us enjoyed ourselves in a way we have never done since or had never done before.

Outside the camp the Dublins extended into skirmishing formation with ten paces extension between each man.

And on we went, keeping our dressing as best we could, on and on—nearer and nearer to that death-dealing hill before us, and which, now that we were reaching its foot, towered over our heads like an almost perpendicular wall, seemingly impossible to scale, and still more impossible in the face of that rain of shot and shell.

The artillery, which was covering our advance and sending shells flying over our heads into the enemy's position, had now ceased fire.

The bugle rang out again.

It was the "Advance!"

A man on my right flank went down with a gasp of pain, and I closed in. Another went silently down right in front of me. They were falling on all sides now. A man suddenly stopped, wavered, made a step forward, and then bit the dust without a word.

"Bearer party, forward!" rang out from grim-faced comrade in front to comrade in rear. "Sergeant down. Bearer party here!"

And then, for the first time, I began to wonder whether my turn would be the next. And that is a bad thing to think about in such circumstances, for it tends to make a man wince and duck; and, when a man is thinking about himself and those flying bullets, he forgets his dressing.

But the Boer fire was terrible; and, if only it had been truer, few of us would have reached the foot of the Dundee Hill, much less the top. We were right within the murderous zone now, and there was no going back. On—to death or victory!

"See, matey," shouted my left flank man, a grim-faced private who was sweating and puffing away like a steam engine, "see the Rifles over there? Look, they're going up that side! Oho, what a hill to climb!"

And the whole ridge of the hill was a line of livid flame and shrieking death.

And then came the final order.

"We've got to get to the top of that hill, my lads," shouted the captain of the company. "Who'll be there first—the Royal Irish or the Fighting Devils—eh?"

And the men sent up a thrilling cheer that must have carried to the crest of the Dundee Kop.

"Fix bayonets!"

There was an ominous clank of cold steel and the bayonets glistened in the morning sunlight.

"Why on earth didn't we bring a bayonet, Jacko, old man?" growled Gilly glumly.

I shrugged my shoulders. This was one of the moments in life when it seemed a desecration to speak.

Another bugle blast and a volley of hoarse commands from subalterns and sergeants.

"At the double!"

Our old sergeant-major threw out his fifty-inch chest and snorted like a war-horse scenting the battle.

Phut! phut! phut!

"Captain down!" shouted a private. "This is getting hot!"

"Dublins!" yelled the colonel, who was leading the advance on foot, his little Arab having been shot down under him, "Dublins! There's the hill! Ye've got to get to the top somehow! *Charge!*"

CHAPTER XXX.

THE STORMING OF THE HILL OF DUNDEE.

"CHARGE!"

Every man sprang forward, faces aflame with grim determination. Bullets hailed around them, and many a gallant lad was left behind as the price of that day's work.

"Talk about your Majubas and your Dargais!" growled a puffing sergeant-major. "Blow me, Billy, if this 'ere don't knock 'em on the head. Aha, me bhoy, just ye wait till I get up there at 'em! You just wait——"

Phut!

He had spoken his last words. He never reached the top. He was shot through the heart, and I nearly stumbled over him.

But he was one in a hundred. The slaughter was terrible, as it must always be nowadays when a general makes a frontal attack in the face of modern weapons.

"Follow me, my lads!" cried a young subaltern, dashing to the front of the section under his command with a dead man's Lee-Metford in his hand, his sword discarded.

It was a wonderful and fearful experience, and I shall dream of it all my life long. I was mad. I hardly knew what occurred. I remember seizing a fallen comrade's rifle with bayonet fixed, throwing my own away and dashing on shouting like a lunatic.

Then I lost sight of Gilly; but I could not stop then. It was onward, to the top, and as soon as possible; for, until that crest was scaled, that fearful, withering fire would continue.

And there was no order now. We were tearing up the hill, over boulder and through bush and thorn, every man for himself and all anxious to get to the top first.

And the officers? Heaven only knew where they were—picked off, most of them, by those sharpshooters at the top. Many lay on the crimson-stained slope behind us cheering us on. But the colonel still led the centre of the advance, as yet unscathed. Privates yelled their hoarse and inarticulate advice to him, sergeants were leading companies, major and private exchanged rough, grim banter.

Still we went up—higher and higher, nearer and nearer, to that crest of fire.

Surely never had hill been stormed like it before!

"Steady there, men, steady! Close in there, B section!"

I had outdistanced my line—if line there was now. Twice had I fallen and risen again. Wounded or not, I knew not. I was mad!

Up and up; and now almost at the top! Yes, at crest at last!

Over the crest and then, slashing, clubbing, bayoneting, we went right through the foe, leaving wounds and death behind us.

Heaven knows what I did on that day. Grim-faced Boers rose before us, a solid wall of flesh, and then they turned and fled before that awful onslaught.

The Rifles were up now on the right; and, on the left, the Irish Fusiliers; but the Boers fled down the hill demoralised, broken, beaten, leaving their guns behind them, their wounded and their dead.

"Hurrah! Hurrah! Well done, Dublins! Well done! Superb!"

It was the colonel. He waved his sword in the air.

A whistle shrieked, and then another. Whistles shrieked along the serried lines like the wail of lost souls.

It was the "Cease fire!"

But for some of us there was no "cease fire." We were mad, intoxicated; and many tore down the other side of the hill after the retreating rabble of Boers and Free Staters. I was with them.

The first batch of retreating Boers ran clean into a charge of cavalry waiting for them at the bottom of the valley.

And they made many a gallant stand, those bluff burghers. They fought and died, like the heroes that they were, fighting. But it was no good. They had all to go. There was no standing against that line of sharp, cold steel, and those Dublin boys behind it.

The day had been ours.

"Three cheers for the Queen!" roared the colonel.

And they gave it him—three ringing cheers from leathern lungs that must have been heard in the Boer laager five miles away.

"Hurrah! Hurrah! *Hurrah!*"

But I heard those hurrahs behind me, for, carried away in the frenzy of the battle, I was charging down the hill with a dozen blood-stained, perspiring Irishmen, and as many more King's Royal Riflemen after the flying chaotic mass of Boers.

The "cease fire" whistle and the bugle calls had meant nothing to me. I heard them not. I was still fighting, and I felt that I should fight till I died!

As I look back now on that terrible time, it is difficult to imagine that it was really I who acted as I did.

I must have run about three or four hundred yards down the comparatively steep incline, through the dust and smoke, over dead men, firing at random, and caring little what I did, so long as I could get in amongst them again, when I saw the cavalry down there in the spruit, rallying for another charge.

They were very close, and I was wondering whether I should be included in their objective if I went much further when I slipped. My foot caught in a thorn-bush, and I plunged face foremost, my rifle shot from my hand, and I still bear the graze on my nose that was then caused by its rough contact with a jagged piece of rock.

I was not stunned, and, in fact, it was hardly a moment before I was up again.

But the sudden fall had brought me to my senses. I began to understand that I was doing a very silly thing. In fact, I *thought!*

I was alone—that is to say, there were no fighting men within fifty yards of me. Around me lay dead and wounded Boers, some moaning, others grim-faced, resigned to their fate like the brave men that they were. I noticed one old grey beard smoking a pipe and waiting patiently until some merciful Red Cross Ambulance man—Boer or Briton, it was all the same now—should come along and save him from his agony.

The excited men, in whose company I had been, were down there below firing ragged volleys. At the back and up the hill I heard the hoarse shouting of orders, bugle calls, and that long wailing whistle.

But my eyes fell upon something else. A few yards from me lay the prostrate figure of a man with a wound in his neck.

"For mercy's sake lift me up," he groaned; "lift me up or kill me! I can't stand this—I—oh, great Heaven!"

His voice was weak—weak as a child's plaintive wail; but it sent my temples throbbing like a steam hammer. *I knew that voice.* I turned and stared at the wretched man.

"What!" I gasped, "can it be? Can such a change have been wrought in a man?"

"Lift me up, soldier! Lift me up or I shall go mad! Almighty, have pity!"

He made a terrible effort to rise; but only sank back again with a gasping groan.

(*To be continued; commenced in No.* 397.)

A Date to Remember—

Wednesday, August 22nd, 1900.

WHY?

BECAUSE ON THAT DAY WILL BE ISSUED

NO. 415 OF "CHUMS,"

The FIRST No. of a NEW VOLUME.

IT WILL CONTAIN, AMONGST OTHER ITEMS,

THE OPENING CHAPTERS OF

Two Thrilling New Serials,

By G. MANVILLE FENN,
and ARTHUR RIGBY;

A Splendid Plate in Colours,

The First of Two New Series of Chats

(Illustrated from Photographs),

The Offers of Many Valuable Prizes,

INCLUDING

A "CHUMS" BICYCLE

AND

Six Months' Pocket-Money,

&c. &c. &c.

WILL YOU LOOK OUT FOR FURTHER PARTICULARS,

AND TELL ALL YOUR CHUMS?

To Guard the Emperor.

THE body-guard of the German Emperor, members of which accompany him on some of his rides and excursions, consists of fifteen stalwart young foresters, all of whom have been trained under officials in the royal forests.

After serving their three years in the army, they are "picked" by a Court marshal, and personally presented to the Emperor, who selects those that seem fittest to be his personal attendants.

The rule is that after a term of service, varying from nine to twelve years, they are allowed to retire, when a position as forester is given them in the royal forests.

The yoke of service rests lightly on the body-guards, for they are "in attendance" only occasionally, and for this, needless to say, they receive very good payment.

LITTLE SON (suffering with toothache): "Father, did you ever have a tooth pulled out?"

Father (encouragingly) "Hundreds of 'em, my boy; hundreds of 'em."

FIFTY POUNDS FOR A PRIZE CAVY.

The Guinea-Pig as Seen at his Best.

NO doubt not a few Chums, at some time or other, have kept a guinea-pig. But do you know that there is a regular guinea-pig "fancy,"

TORTOISESHELLS BRED FOR SHOW.
(From a Photograph.)

and that these little animals win prizes and change hands for considerable sums of money?

To learn all about it the writer recently interviewed Mr. F. W. Walker, President of the South of England Cavy Club—guinea-pigs are always "cavies" to the "fancy"—and President of the Angora (rabbit) Club, and had also some photographs taken, which are here reproduced.

"Let us begin with the tortoiseshells, plain and simple," said Mr. Walker. "These are what you might term the ordinary variety, red and black in colour, in well-defined patches, combining depth and uniformity. They are the ordinary variety, but having special points bred in them for a specific purpose, *i.e.*, show; and they are therefore no longer the mere 'fourpenny squeaker' of our schoolboy days.

"In show cavies size is essential, and, other points being equal, a big one is bound to win over a small one. The largest prize cavies, I should say, weigh from 2½ to 3 pounds. The experiment has been tried of having weight classes at shows, to prevent ingenious exhibitors showing old cavies as young ones, but it does not seem to have answered.

"As to food, cavies take kindly to most sorts of green meat. I feed mine in the morning on oats; in the evening on bread and milk, dandelion or chicory, grass, etc. They love tender grass, and that fresh mown off a lawn they simply revel in. Of roots they are very fond, and, particularly in winter time, carrots, beetroots, and mangolds come in handy. An authority on cavies has said, 'They are fond of a lump of snow in winter for drink.' I tried them with a small snowball, but they refused to look at it. They preferred warm milk sop, and I think showed good taste, eh?

"The largest picture shows you my rabbitry, with the cavy hutches at the back towards the window to my right as I stand facing you. The cavy sitting so obligingly on the table is a Dutch-marked one, marked in all respects like a Dutch rabbit. The dogs you see in the picture are prize-winning Russian wolf-hounds, and, of course, not to be trusted alone with the 'pigs.' Some others of the same breed killed one cavy with fright, having found a hutch door open and taken the poor little inmate out. I suddenly suspected that the door was open, and shouted to the dogs. They dropped the cavy, but fear had killed him.

MR. F. W. WALKER'S RABBITRY.
(From a Photograph.)

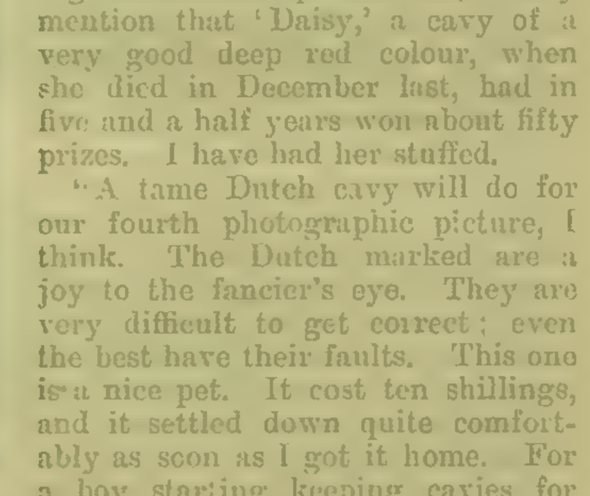
"The cavy does not require so large a hutch as the rabbit. It enjoys a snug dark corner to go and dream in. A model hutch, single, should be about 24 inches long, 18 inches high, and 18 wide. Generally I keep about thirty cavies of various sorts. They all seem to know me, crying vigorously 'Week-a-week' when I appear with the green food. The gardener says, 'With them it's all weeks, no days.'

"There are really three sorts of cavies—English, Abyssinian, and Peruvian. These may be classified under two heads—rough and smooth. The English are the smooth kinds, comprising blacks, reds, whites, creams, agoutis, tortoiseshells, tortoise and whites, brindles, Dutch-marked, etc. Abyssinian should have the coat harsh and not more than an inch in length, and should be well 'rosetted.' (The "rosettes" are like little crowns of hair, growing on the back and sides, and require a good deal of coaxing to get into the right shape.) Peruvians have long silky hair covering the head, and like a flowing mane all over the body, furnished with an abundance of tresses.

"Cats do not kill cavies. I had one cat that would paw and play with them as with a mouse; but they are rather large to kill. They can scratch and bite, too, if they want to defend themselves; but in the ordinary way they probably would simply squeal if annoyed or attacked by a bigger animal. For bedding for our cavies, by the way, straw over a little sawdust is best. At night it is a good plan to put some hay over the straw. The animals then eat the hay, and still have the straw to lie upon, instead of eating up all their bedding. They have, as a rule, very good appetites, though, of course, the young fancier will not find them expensive to keep.

"Next we come to a specimen of pure white cavy. It has pink eyes. What is the rarest colour? That is rather a puzzle. Probably, grey agouti, silver brown that is, without any red on the body. Length of life, of course, varies: some live to six or seven years, and I have one living that was bred from Lord St. Vincent's stock in 1893. Personally, I have never been bitten by a cavy intentionally; but sometimes they may nearly take in a bit of your finger with the green-stuff you are offering them. A doctor had one of my cavies as a pet for his daughter. One day when he took it up—either he squeezed it or it had a sore place—it turned and bit him so that he had to cauterise the wound. At Reigate Show a man was bitten when penning his cavy. If they do bite, they are either being hurt or frightened.

"You have heard that cavies are good to eat! Yes, I have been told they are most excellent, though my cook refuses me a trial. It is said they eat like young rabbits. At one agricultural show, some years since, cavies were included in the classes. A worthy alderman who took the chair at the dinner made the remark that 'cavies were no good, dead or alive.' Whereat a newspaper man smacked his lips, and whispered audibly, 'That shows he has never tasted cavy pie.' I understand that a president of the National Cavy Club kept a warren on purpose to supply himself with this toothsome delicacy.



A TAME DUTCH SPECIMEN.
(From a Photograph.)

"Cavies may be taught tricks and to come when called. One that I gave to a lady lives in the dining-room on a side-table, and when she calls 'Bunny,' it answers promptly 'Week-a-week!' It will also beg for green food. Another, belonging to an invalid lady, will scramble up into her lap to be fed there and remain quite a long time. It has a box on the floor by the dining-room window, and when the fire is alight it sits down in front of it and goes to sleep for hours. It is quite clean in the house.

"As to 'points,' you may like to note that the prize cavy should have a large head, deep-set shoulders, be of robust shape and ample size, and have a good Roman nose. Concerning numbers of prizes won, I may mention that 'Daisy,' a cavy of a very good deep red colour, when she died in December last, had in five and a half years won about fifty prizes. I have had her stuffed.

"A tame Dutch cavy will do for our fourth photographic picture, I think. The Dutch marked are a joy to the fancier's eye. They are very difficult to get correct; even the best have their faults. This one is a nice pet. It cost ten shillings, and it settled down quite comfortably as soon as I got it home. For a boy starting keeping cavies for prizes, I should say an average pair would cost ten shillings; but prices vary with the buyer and seller. I know of a clergyman who, in a Bristol shop, purchased a cavy for two shillings, sent it to a show, and sold it for half a sovereign. The 'pig' was hardly noticed, but a better connoisseur knew its value and secured it. That 'pig' won no end of prizes afterwards, and so did its descendants

A PURE WHITE CAVY.
(From a Photograph.)

A "GOLDEN AGOUTI."
(From a Photograph.)

The advice I would give is—you must start with good stock.

"Cavies, of course, travel long distances to and from shows. I live south of London, and I have sent to Edinburgh, Manchester, Accrington, Prescot, Birmingham, Dewsbury, Bideford (a tire-

some journey), etc. Long-distance shows, though, are a great risk to exhibitors. I have known a cavy to have an eye knocked out; and the famous cavy 'Galtee More' died through cold on one journey. Some grand black 'pigs' were stolen in transit.

"Brushing is a good thing before showing, as it takes off the loose hair. For 'smooths' a polishing cloth makes them look like satin, or kid gloves will render the coat glossy. Their ears should be carefully washed; and a white cavy may have a soap and water bath, afterwards being placed in a basket near the fire. When dry, brush well. I have heard of red cavies being treated with a kind of dye, but this does not fail to claim the attention of the judge.

"Like all animals, some are tamer than others. They should be handled when young so as to break them of wildness, and it is not a bad plan to let them be petted by ladies. A proof of their tameness is whether they will sit still on a table. I fancy the smooth blacks do not tame so well as other varieties, and the most likely ones for docile pets are those that nibble at their wires. They bite the wood of their hutches pretty freely, and a piece of loose wood provided will do something to prevent damage to their houses, and be a plaything for them. Cavies have nerves, and do not appreciate shocks. The banging of a door will make them jump just like a human being.

"The last of our pictures shows you a 'golden agouti,' golden brown in colour. He is so called from the agouti, which you may see in the caviary at the Zoo. He is an animal of the same colour; but I hardly fancy that will prompt you to want to handle him. The under part of the body should be red, from nose to foot golden brown in marking, or 'ticking' as it is called. Many specimens fail in 'ticking' on the feet, and I think fanciers sometimes colour feed these as they do canaries.

"Cavies are full grown at eighteen months, but mature soon after four months. At two years they are at their prime and do best in the show pen. You have heard it stated that mice will not come where guinea-pigs are! A fallacy. Mice love cavies, and will sleep in their empty hutches. I killed one myself the other day thus fast asleep. The mice like the oats and drink that the cavies have, and at meal times, when the cavies squeak, you may hear the mice in their nests following suit. Rats will attack and eat cavies.

"The white pig shown in the third photographic reproduction above was very cunning. Sometimes the cat would come into the room where his kennel was, and he would watch that cat as keenly as it watched him. He kept near his kennel, and when pursued rushed through his morning-room to his bedroom, where the cat could not reach him. All the animals loved the 'pig's' kennel because they helped themselves to his bread and milk. Even the parrakeet used to walk to the kennel and steal hay. When cavies fight amongst themselves they not only run round and round and bite, but they jump on each other, one trying to knock all the breath out of the other's body.

"Record price for a cavy? Well, the highest figures I have known are £20 for the Abyssinian 'Rob Roy'; and the Dutch cavy 'Klondyke' must have fetched nearly that sum. The tortoise and white 'Champion Elegance' is always catalogued at £35, but I do not know what price the owner would take for it. Higher still comes 'Florence,' the wonderful Abyssinian, which actually fetched £50! One man used to call himself the 'Cavy King,' and whenever a 'pig' beat his, he used to claim the winner at whatever price it was catalogued."

Their Music Explained.

The musical tree found in the West India Islands has a peculiar-shaped leaf, and pods with a split or open edge. The wind passing through these forms the sound which gives the tree its peculiar name.

In Barbados there is a valley filled with these trees, and when the trade winds blow across the island a constant moaning, deep-toned whistle is heard from it, which, in the still hours of the night, has a very weird and unpleasant effect.

A species of acacia, growing abundantly in the Soudan, is also called the whistling tree. Its shoots are frequently, by the agency of insects, distorted in shape and swollen into a globular bladder, from one to two inches in diameter.

After the insect has emerged from a circular hole in the side of the swelling, the opening, played upon by the wind, becomes a musical instrument, equal in sound to a flute.

A MAN who is just "home from the war" is always an interesting fellow. There are many such in London now, and I imagine that Chums will have met some of them, and heard already some wondrous tales of their adventures and perils. No written book is ever half as interesting as that human book which sits at our firesides and tells of daring deeds. It is the personal fact which so engrosses us, the "ego," the man who actually saw and did. Here, for instance, was I yesterday sitting down to lunch with a man who helped to take Cronje at Paardeberg. Before I met him, I thought that the war correspondents, the special descriptive writers, the newspaper articles, the books had told me all that there was to tell of Cronje's great surrender; but lo and behold, I had not been with my man for five minutes when the whole affair had a new interest for me. Here was a Chum who had seen Cronje come out of his hole—a man who had been wounded in the field, who witnessed the famous bayonet charge, who had himself killed Boers at the bayonet's point. I said that he was worth twenty books, and lured him on to talk with me.

—*—

At first of his wound! How did it feel to be wounded? He answered me so plainly that a child could have understood him. "I was lying behind a stone, potting at the Boers," he said; "we couldn't see the enemy, not a man of them, but their bullets were pinging all around us, and every minute saw one or more of our fellows go down. Presently, as the order came to advance, I tried to push forward from one sheltering stone to another, and had got within a yard of new cover when it seemed as though a sledge hammer struck my left leg and knocked it clean off. So real was the sensation that, for a moment, I turned round instinctively to see where my leg had gone to. Then it occurred to me that I had only been struck by a bullet, and for a little while I lay insensible on the veldt. When I came to, the terrific sun was pouring on my face (for my helmet had tumbled off), and the pain in my leg was like that of a red-hot iron thrust under the flesh."

—*—

This was an interesting story, you will admit, but there were other things said which were, at least, to me, very curious and novel. One fact I remarked especially, and this was the burning pain caused by the bullet which had entered the trooper's leg just above the knee, and had come out behind the thigh. My man accounted for this burning in the simplest possible way—viz, that the bullet was red hot when it struck him. Being but a hundred yards from the Boer trenches, the missile had no time to lose its white heat before it entered the flesh. This, I understand from other soldiers, is quite a common experience. When bullets leave modern rifles, their velocity heats them to a white heat. You can imagine what intense agony such a bullet causes when it enters a man's flesh before it has had time to cool.

—*—

Our Chum, whose experiences I am narrating for you, was twelve hours on the battlefield before they picked him up. He says that even the pain of the wound was as nothing to those hours of loneliness and danger. Often as he lay there, the Boers would take a pot at him—or so it seemed, as he heard the bullets pinging about him. When I say that two bullets lodged in his helmet, one in his haversack, and one in his pouch, you will agree that a miracle only brought him back alive. In the end he owed his safety to a comrade who heard his voice in the darkness and went and called the ambulance. The subsequent journey in a bullock waggon to the base hospital was, he declares, the most awful experience of his life. He thought every moment that he would go mad with the pain.

—*—

I give you these gruesome details, Chums, not for any love of them, but because I believe that it is good for all of us to know what the meaning of war really is. As my friend suffered, so have thousands suffered in the campaign now terminating. No words could tell of all the human misery, the anguish, the pain that these battle-fields have witnessed. And, mark you, most of this suffering has been caused by an enemy whom Tommy Atkins has not even seen. I am assured that men fought all through the Boer War and did not see a hundred Boers. The smokeless powder, the trenches, the constant retreats, kept the enemy invisible. There are even soldiers who fought at Colenso who declare that they did not see a couple of Boers all the time they were in South Africa. This fact is as astonishing as it is little realised by those of us who remained at home. We still imagine a battle-field as a great arena where thousands of men on either side fight as men fought in the good old days of muskets and bayonets. But the true picture is so different—the picture of mountains and valleys where the eye cannot detect a single human being, but whence come death and pain swiftly. Give Tommy Atkins a foe to charge and he's your man. But, naturally enough, he doesn't like an invisible host. There's something uncanny about it which he cannot even yet understand.

—*—

Before we leave this question of war, just a word in answer to Mr. W. H. Smith, of Sunderland, who desires to know the history of the white flag and why it is an emblem of truce. In our recent war, unfortunately, the white flag has been more often the emblem of treachery. There is nothing which delights the heart of the wily Boer so much as to fly a white flag from the roof of a farmhouse and then to sit in the best parlour of the same farm and to pot at any Tommy Atkins who chances to ride up on the strength of the flag. Happily, in Europe, the use of the white flag is not often abused. It must be a very old flag, I imagine, for we read of it even in the middle ages—but how precisely it came to signify peace, I cannot tell.

—*—

Some say that the Crusaders adopted it; others assume that white was made the colour of peace

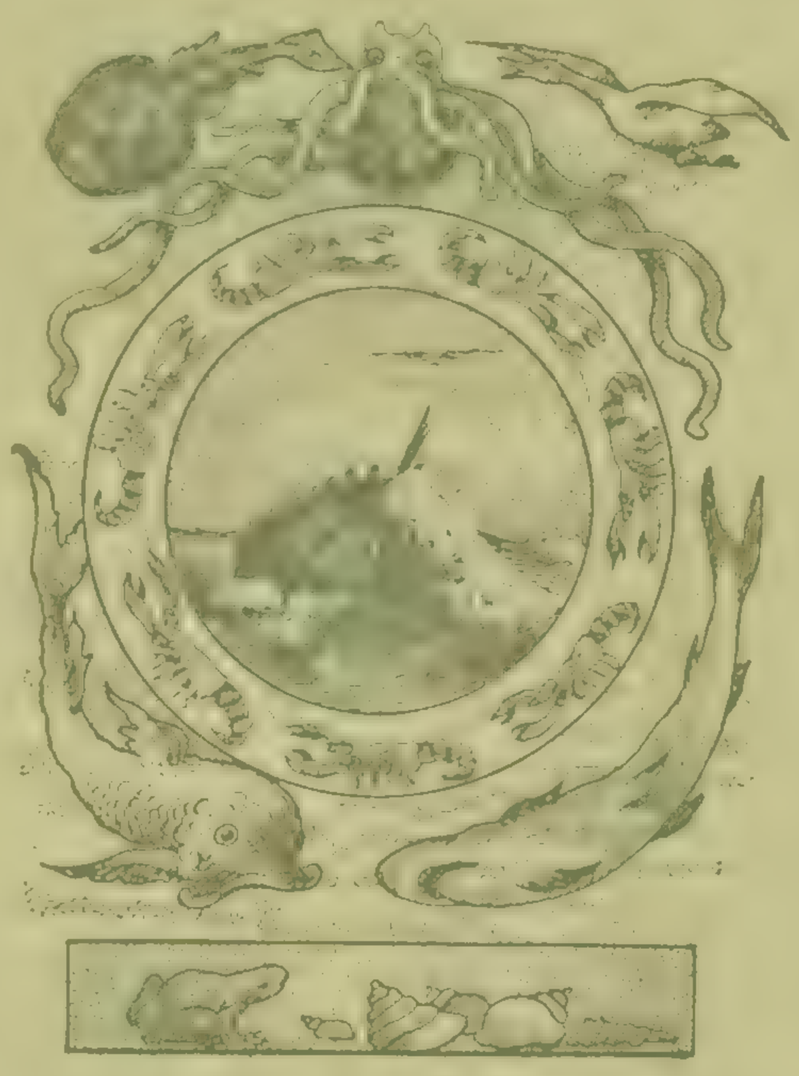
OUR PUZZLES.

No. 1.

I S V O E Y E
O D S L E Y H
F E W B S P E
I S O I F H R
I R W O O O N

If the [illegible] seven rows of five letters be properly [illegible] well-known proverb will appear.

No. 2.



If the initials of three, the last letters of four, and the middle letters of the remaining two, of the names of the above objects be properly arranged, they will form the name of a place connected with the war in South Africa.

[Drawn by J. L. Biggar, 16, Leven Street, Pollokshields, Glasgow, to whom a Solid Silver Pencil-Case has been forwarded.]

Answers to Puzzles in No. 411.

No. 1.—Admiral Seymour.

No. 2.—Millais; magnet, ivy, leopard, lily, apple, iris, shield.

because white in ecclesiastical liturgy is typical of that virtue. A simpler explanation would seem to be that the colour was used to distinguish it from all other flags. No nation has ever used white alone for its banner—and besides, those who were besieged in cities had no flags, and would be compelled, therefore, to hang up their shirts or their sheets just to show that they had had enough of it. If there be any learned Chum among our readers who would care to enlighten us further on this matter, we will lend him a willing ear.

—*—

This question concerning white flags is not the only one of a perplexing order I have received this week. No sooner have I done with it than Waggles hands me a postcard from Master Eddington, of Aston, near Birmingham, who is puzzled in the matter of referees and umpires. Why, he asks, do we call the football man a referee, and the cricket man an umpire? Well, I fancy it's just a case of Sam Weller and his name over again. You take it according to the taste and fancy of the player. True, there is a slight difference in the real meaning of the words—umpire signifying a man who pronounces judgment between two parties, while a referee is one to whom a cause is referred back. But, practically speaking, it comes to the same thing—with a difference. This difference is best explained in the words of Waggles, who says—"Referees is coves whose hats you smash when you don't like their werdicts; but humpires is holy men—you never heard of no one a knockin' down a humpire, and sittin' on him—whereas, if you didn't knock the stuffin' out of yer referee occasional, he'd feel lonely like, and think you wus a neglectin' him." An astute judgment, gentlemen, with which we may well leave the question.

—*—

One of our fellows who is just off to the seaside asks me if I think it is worth his while to take a cricket bag with him. Of course I do. If every fellow who is going off just now to the salubrious shores of Yarmouth or Margate or any other watering-place, would take cricket things, what jolly little matches he could get. Boys at the seaside are often bored for the lack of anything to do, and then they begin to lament the bags they left at home. It's a safe rule for any holiday never to leave bike or cricket bags or lawn tennis, racket or bathing suits behind. A little bother on a railway journey may be rewarded by hours of fun and enjoyment. As for our bikes, well, only a lunatic would go far from London without his. A man with a bike is just as free as air wherever he may pitch his camp. If he be in the country, all the towns roundabout are open to him. If he be in a seaside town, he can explore the villages for miles round. As for the bathing things, they permit a man to have many a dip, where otherwise he would be refused. There is nothing jollier than to take drawers and a towel on your bike, and to ride to some quiet sandy bay, and there have a dip as fancy dictates. Try it, Chums, in these splendid weeks to come.

—*—

In conclusion—a whisper of news which finds me light-hearted and frolicsome even as the playful goat. Waggles is packing his bag for the eternal, the ever-favoured Margate. For the next week or two his address will be "the old shop—fust to the right, agen the clock over by Queen Victoria and her statute." His luggage appears to consist of two paper collars and a Jew's harp. There is wickedness in his eye and a general flippancy of manner which promise great things. I congratulate the town of [illegible]e upon her acquisition. May she receive him with open arms! may her niggers cease to desire his blood! may the music of her lonely waves strike dulcet chords to drown the harp that once in "Chums" good offices—— But we leave the simile; sufficient that he is going, that your Editor is younger, that even the new boy smiles gladly as one who has, for a while, found peace.

**** *Letters from Chums to the Editor are invited, and if of general interest will be dealt with in these columns.*

Fish are not good conversationalists; but if you strike the right line you can draw them out.

"Is that performer familiar with your music?" was asked of a composer at the concert.

"He must be," replied the composer, who was writhing; "he takes such liberties with it."

HEADLONG DOWN A MOUNTAIN.

The Discomfiture of Bolivar the Bully.

"JIM, I am going away for a couple of days. You know how to look after the camp, and nothing is likely to go wrong."

With these words my father took an abrupt leave of me. Of course I knew how to manage things; I had not lived the first fifteen years of my life in the Rockies to no purpose. But when my father said that nothing would go wrong during his absence he was mistaken. Bolivar lost his burro.

Now Bolivar was an idle, big, rough scamp, and his burro was his sole and only property. Like all burros, it was neither a mule nor a donkey, but something of both. Bolivar made a living by letting this animal out to hire. The mine in which my father held shares was situated high up a mountain side on which a tramway was laid. Several burros—Bolivar's amongst them—were employed to draw the light cars up the steep track to the mine.

And now Bolivar's burro was gone! The man came round to me, shouting:

"Somebody's stole that beast!" he yelled.

"I don't think so," I said calmly.

"And pray why don't yer think so?"

"Because it's not worth stealing. Only a lunatic would think of taking your vicious, ill-fed beast," I replied.

"THE TERRIFIED ANIMAL WAS PLUNGING AHEAD."

Bolivar ground his teeth in rage.

"None of yer impudence!" he roared. "You had 'im last, and if he ain't stole where is he? You'd better pay up, and you can't do it any too soon, either!"

"Well, suppose we look for him first?" I suggested, and Bolivar was obliged to acquiesce in this decision.

That day I devoted all the time I could spare to searching for the missing beast. And here I will say at once that I discovered some time afterwards that Bolivar had taken the beast himself. Becoming a trifle more destitute than usual, he had secreted "Solomon"—the burro—in the mountains, with a view to frightening me into paying a large sum by way of recompense.

Towards the close of that day, I had occasion to go up the tramway to the mine. Having accomplished my purpose I started to return. The mode of descent was not the same as that of going up. The burros that pulled the cars up were not needed in going down, and were sent back to the valley by another way; while the cars were allowed to shoot down the tramway by their own weight, restrained only by brakes.

The tramway was very narrow and clung to ledges and crags in what seemed a very insecure manner. The track was covered nearly the whole way by a snow-shed, the roof of which inclined at an angle with the mountain's side, and in the sides of which were holes that let in light and air.

I seated myself in a car, and gently loosened the brakes.

The miniature waggon glided off with an easy rolling motion. Far below I saw a horseman who looked like a baby on a dog. It was a long distance to the bottom.

Presently I was spinning along, the light car swinging swiftly round the sharp curves, and bits of white flashing past where the holes were cut for light. I deftly loosened or tightened the brakes as the grade rose or fell, and by this means went a steady rate of speed.

I was about half-way down, shooting along at a fine pace, when, in a patch of light from one of the holes ahead, I saw, standing on the track, Solomon—Bolivar's burro!

It was anything but a welcome sight. The beast's presence meant perhaps a fatal collision; I might be hurled from the car, through the sides of the snow-shed and dashed to pieces on the mountain. Instantly I put on the two brakes with all my force. Possibly the action was too sudden or violent, but one of the brakes snapped.

I was badly frightened, but I determined that I would keep my nerve. As I dashed down upon the burro I uttered a yell that sounded very loud in that narrow shed. Solomon was scared and began to run.

I yelled again and again, making the most hideous sound I was capable of. And now did the burro develop powers of speed that no one, not even Bolivar, could have imagined he possessed. The faster Solomon ran, the louder and wilder I yelled, until the terrified animal was plunging ahead like a runaway locomotive. The tram-car was only a few yards behind him, and creeping closer and closer to his heels.

Luckily the single brake held, but I was still going at a perilous rate, and to stop was out of the question. Solomon's speed was marvellous. He was doing his best to avoid a mangling, and doing it well. The race continued for several minutes. I was getting nearer and nearer to the speeding burro. I scarcely breathed.

All at once Solomon came opposite an opening of unusual size in the side of the shed, where some boards had been torn off for an unknown purpose. Here the animal conceived the idea that it would be a good place to side-track himself until the fast express had gone by. Accordingly he turned aside, and aimed his head at the opening. In this praiseworthy purpose he was materially assisted by the car. Just as he was leaping from the track his hind legs were struck, and I had just time to see him whirling head over heels through the opening.

For a wonder the car kept the track and dashed on down the mountain. On reaching level ground the single brake speedily brought the car to a stop. That was one of the thankful moments of my life.

I immediately climbed back that I might find the body of the unhappy burro. "He'll have to be paid for now, that is certain!" I said to myself. Then my eyes fell on Solomon.

Injured? Not the least!

There he stood by the hole in the snow-shed, just where he had gathered himself together after the car had struck him, regarding my approach with a mournful and reproachful look on his countenance.

For a moment I was stunned by the spectacle. Then I took Solomon by one of his long ears and led him away to Bolivar.

"Bolivar," I said in a suppressed voice, "here's your burro."

Bolivar was very angry. He kicked the burro, which, in the circumstances, was decidedly hard on poor Solomon.

They Started Again.

Many stories are told at the expense of a certain ex-magistrate with a glass eye. One day, while trying a case with a jury, he fell asleep, but, as the glass eye was open, the lawyers and those interested in the case knew it not, nor that their evidence was all for naught.

They only discovered that the genial justice was sound asleep when one of the lawyers arose and asked for the decision of the court, and, not receiving an answer, demanded of the clerk what was the matter.

The clerk hastily awoke the sleepy official, and formally stated to the assemblage that the eye which had been open was glass.

The case had to be tried again from the start, as the magistrate hadn't heard a word of the evidence.

Mother: "Where's Bobby?"

Willie: "He's downstairs."

Mother: "What's he doing?"

Willie: "His bicycle is out of breath, and he's giving it some more!"

How Often You See It.

1. Putting on the pads.

"HE'S ONLY A HANDFUL—BUT A MAN!"

Two Bugles and a Plucky Boy.

"WHEN a thing's got ter be did, it's *got* ter be did."

Billy Bobbins set his teeth hard and clenched his fists as he delivered himself of the above remark.

He was dodging about among the crowd at Southampton. No one appeared to notice him, which was all in Billy's favour.

Cheer after cheer rent the air as the gallant fellows of the Imperial Yeomanry embarked, and Billy gradually wriggled his way a little further to the front.

"There goes dad," he muttered to himself, as a smart sergeant stepped on board the troopship. "He'll be awful wild, but I s'pose it can't be helped. Too little am I? Wot about that? I can ride almost as good as dad, an' there ain't a bugler aboard that ship as I couldn't turn green wi' envy if they'd give me a chance. Dad knows that, an' I believe he'd 'a' took me along if he could.

"'Agin orders,' he says ter me, when I asked him. "Agin orders! The Queen 'wants men.'"

Billy's eyes filled with tears, but only for a moment.

"Don't care," he muttered, fiercely dashing his hand across his eyes, "Dad or no dad, Gover'mint or no Gover'mint—I'm a going to South Africa—if I haves to walk—which I shan't!"

Sergeant Bobbins, V.C., Billy's father—was an old soldier. For the best part of twenty years he had served with the "Queen's Greys." Now, after a short experience of civilian life, which had palled upon him, he had seized the opportunity to return to his old love, and, as he put it, was once more "a somebody!"

Five days out from Southampton he was staring over the troopship's side at nothing in particular, his thoughts wholly centred on the lad he had left in England.

"Poor Billy," he mused. "He's a soldier born, and he'll find things a bit dull on Uncle Bob's farm. Wish I could have brought him out, but——"

Sergeant Bobbins' ruminations were interrupted by the approach of an orderly.

"Colonel wants you, sergeant," he said; adding mysteriously, "You're in for it!"

When Sergeant Bobbins entered the colonel's presence, he was utterly unprepared for the surprise awaiting him.

Guarded on one side by a corporal, and on the other by Captain Melrose—a young Australian going to the front to join his contingent—stood a short, squat figure, his features begrimed and black as the coal bunkers from which he had been dragged.

"Billy!" gasped the astounded sergeant.

"Yes, dad!" cheerfully responded the disreputable-looking object. "It's me! Couldn't stop behind nohow!"

"Of course, sergeant," said the colonel, "you know nothing at all about this unfortunate affair, do you?"

"Nothing, colonel," was the reply. "Until this moment I believed him to be safe in England!"

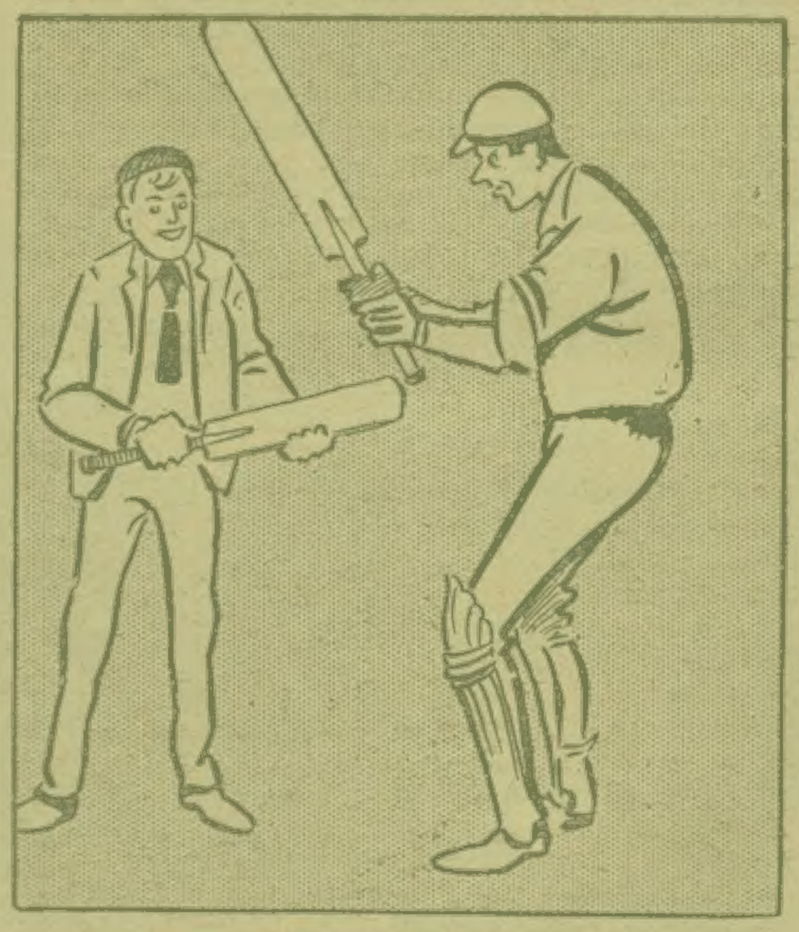
Colonel Redhill, after a thoughtful pause, turned to Billy:

"How did you manage to get on board? How did you evade the sentry?"

"Beg pardin, sir," responded Billy respectfully, "but I didn't evade him. When I tried to come in by the front door, same as the rest of 'em, the sentry twigged me an' I had to clear orf the steps pretty smart. Then, when the old gentleman in the cocked hat" (Billy meant the Lord Mayor) "was a-making his farewell speech to the men, I noticed as one o' the servants had left one o' them round winders open.

"While everybody was cheerin' an' shoutin', an' nobody watchin' me, I made a spring for the hole in the ship's side, hit it, an' scrambled through.

"Then," continued Billy, "I thought as the



2. Selecting a bat.

further downstairs I got the less chance you'd have o' finding me—an' that's how I came ter be in the coal-hole!"

Colonel Redhill suppressed a desire to laugh, while Captain Melrose bit his lips in the same endeavour.

"Take him away, corporal," said the colonel, with as much severity as he could possibly muster. "See that he's well fed, and we'll consider the best means of sending him back."

Billy's spirits fell at this, only to rise again with a jump before he was out of earshot. A roar of laughter from the cabin was followed by the colonel's voice:

"He's an artful rascal, sergeant, but, hang me, I like his pluck!"

II.

For the next few days—with the exception of half an hour, when Sergeant Bobbins took him in hand—Billy thoroughly enjoyed himself.

His popularity with the men was amazing. In a very short space of time Billy—or "Bugler Bobbs" as the men loved to call him—had borrowed and tested every bugle on board.

"There's one good thing about Bugler Bobbs," remarked a shoeing-smith one day. "You allus knows where to find him. If he ain't a-borrowin' a bugle he's a-blowin' it, an' if he ain't a-blowin' it why he's acting shadder to Captin Melrose."

Captain Melrose had certainly taken a keen interest in the youngster. Though he did not say so to the colonel, he had in reality been aware of the stowaway's presence before that individual could be prevailed upon to "surrender."

One afternoon Captain Melrose, with Billy at his elbow, was indulging in a little revolver practice.

The target—a champagne bottle towed after the ship—proved rather difficult to hit, and after the fourth unsuccessful attempt, Billy took upon himself to offer a word of advice.

"You fires a bit too high, sir," he calmly remarked. "Try a bit lower."

"Indeed!" was the laughing response. "D'you think you could hit it, Bobbs?"

"If I didn't hit it fust time I'd hit it second," promptly replied Billy.

Still laughing, the captain handed over the weapon to Billy. That youth smashed the bottle at the very first attempt.

"Great gum-trees!" gasped the astonished officer. "Who taught you to shoot like that?"

"Dad," said Billy simply; "he's a crack shot is dad!"

"He must be," muttered Captain Melrose, adding to himself as he turned away, "I wonder if it could be managed!"

When the troops reached Cape Town there was a proposal to send Billy back at once. It fell through owing to the fact that the youngster had mysteriously disappeared. Two days later, in all the glory of khaki uniform, he turned up at the camp and confronted his astounded father.

"Where on earth have you been, boy?" gasped the sergeant. "And what's the meaning of this rig-out?"

"It means, dad," said Billy proudly, "that I ain't a boy no longer, I'm a 'Stralian contingent! Bugler Bobbs, of Captain Melrose's Bushrangers! The captain sent me to get your consent, and you'll give it—won't yer, dad?"

Billy had a knack of getting his own way, and "dad" eventually gave in.

III

"There's a small force—supposed to be some of Redhill's men—shut up in a donga three miles to the east, sir!"

It was one of Captain Melrose's scouts who brought in the news, and shortly afterwards a strong

3. Receiving the last word of advice.

force under Melrose himself moved out to the rescue.

The Boers had occupied a small boulder-strewn kopje, and it was necessary to dislodge them from this position before assistance could be given to the besieged.

No sooner were they within range than a terrific fire from the crest of the hill greeted Melrose and his men.

"Down, men!" roared the captain. "To cover."

The Australians were becoming accustomed to the peculiar conditions of South African warfare, and needed no second bidding.

Every bush and stone was taken advantage of, as the gallant fellows crawled slowly but surely up the hill.

"Keep close to me, Bobbs," said Melrose, as Billy crawled along in his wake. "We shall need your bugle shortly."

Billy, gripping his beloved bugle in one hand, and a revolver in the other, merely nodded.

Half-way up the hill was a wide open space absolutely destitute of cover.

"Now, Bobbs!" said the captain when this spot was reached. "Now!"

Billy raised his bugle. Clear and free, without so much as a tremor, the notes of the "Charge" rang out, followed immediately by a wild yell as every man rose to his feet and dashed forward.

The open space was rushed almost without loss. Then, once more taking advantage of the cover, the little force wormed its way towards the summit of the kopje.

The foremost of the Boers were getting nervous, when Captain Melrose turned once more to Billy.

The lad understood. He raised himself on his

elbow, but, before a note rang out, a Mauser bullet tore its way through the bugle.

The expression on Billy's features as he stared at his ruined treasure was almost comical.

"Now, Billy," said Melrose. "Why don't you——"

The captain stopped in sheer astonishment. Clearly and distinctly above the din of battle a bugle—apparently close at hand—sounded the "Retire!"

There was just one moment's hesitancy among the men. Then a short active figure leaped on to a boulder in full view of friend and foe. It was "Bugler Bobbs."

"Retire be blowed," he yelled at the top of his voice—"My bugle's busted! Charge!"

In spite of their peril some of the Colonials actually laughed aloud.

At this moment Billy's revolver twice barked viciously. Then he jumped from his perch; to reappear almost immediately with a bugle, snatched from the nerveless hands of the Boer who had sounded the false call.

"Now, boys!" yelled Bugler Bobbs. "Now, boys, we'll have it!"

As Billy once more sounded the "Charge," a tremendous cheer rent the air, and the next moment the majority of the Boers were in full flight.

One or two doggedly stuck their ground, however, and Captain Melrose, who had tripped up over a small boulder, scrambled to his feet to stare straight into the muzzle of a Mauser at close quarters.

The flame from Billy's revolver as he fired over the officer's shoulder almost singed the captain's cheek.

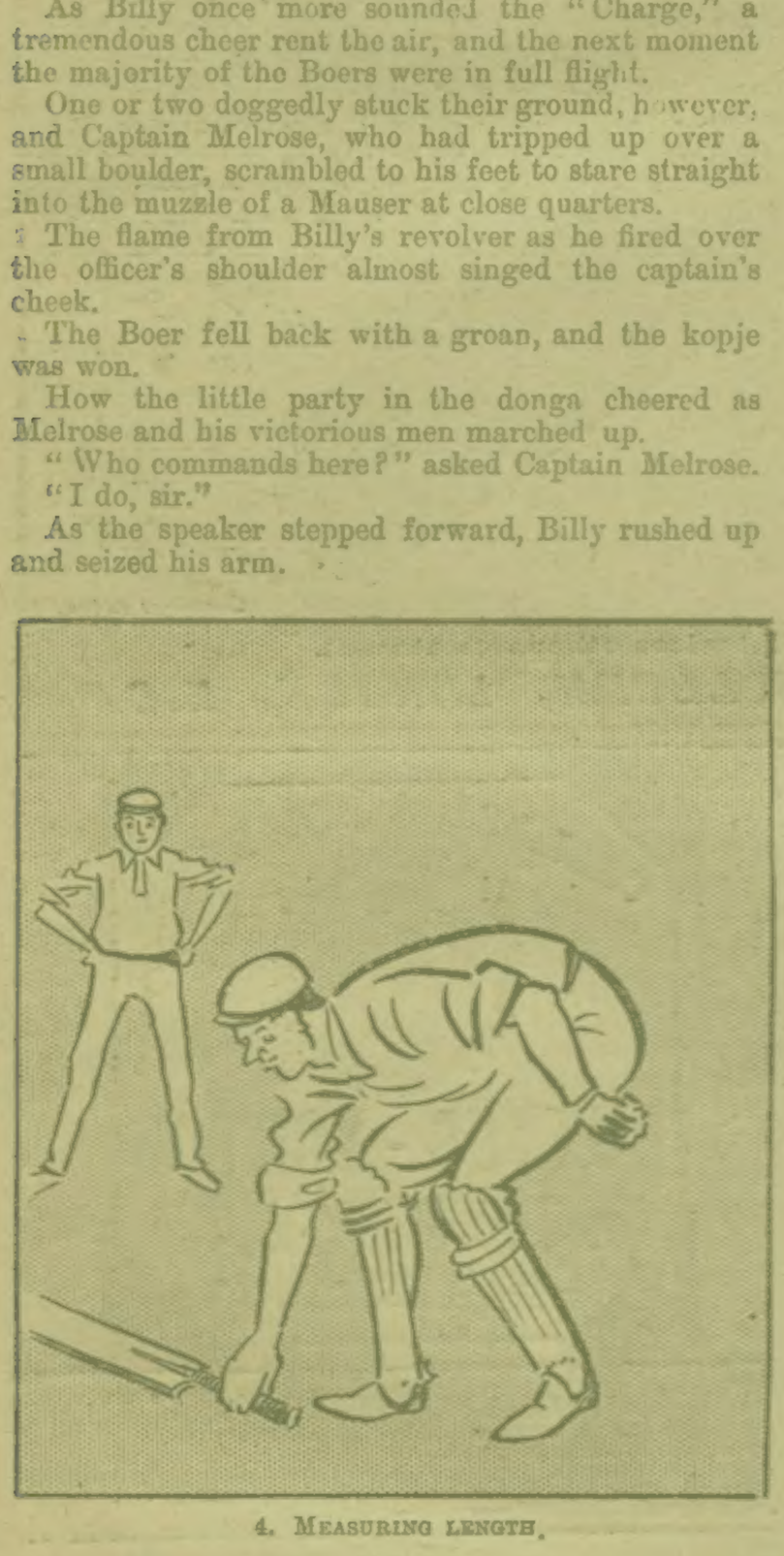
The Boer fell back with a groan, and the kopje was won.

How the little party in the donga cheered as Melrose and his victorious men marched up.

"Who commands here?" asked Captain Melrose.

"I do, sir."

As the speaker stepped forward, Billy rushed up and seized his arm.



4. Measuring length.

"It's dad!" he yelled, dancing excitedly round. "It's dad!"

"What? Billy?" gasped Sergeant Bobbins. "You here! I never thought of seeing you again. We were in a tight corner, and couldn't have held out much longer.

"We owe our lives to you, Captain Melrose," he continued; "and if you've no objection I'm going to call for three cheers for Australia and Captain Melrose!"

The cheers were given with right good will, after which Captain Melrose held up his hand.

"You're mistaken, my friends," he smilingly remarked. "The man who saved your lives—and mine, too—is here"—laying his hand on Billy's shoulder. "He's only a handful—but a man! Why, he not only saved my life, but he usurped my position and actually gave the order to 'Charge!'"

The cheer that followed this remark made Billy Bobbins blush! Tom H. Fowler.

Old Gentleman: "Do you work here, boy?"
Office Boy: "Only when the governor's lookin'."

Led to Success.

Elias Howe, the inventor of the sewing-machine, almost beggared himself before he discovered where the eye of the needle should be placed. It never occurred to him that it should be placed near the point, and he might have failed altogether had it not been for a remarkable dream.

One night he dreamt that he was making a sewing-machine for a savage king in a strange country. As in his actual waking experience, he was rather perplexed about the needle's eye. He thought the king gave him twenty-five hours in which to complete a machine, and if not finished in that time death was to be the punishment.

Howe worked and worked and puzzled and puzzled, and finally gave it up. Then he thought that he was taken out to be beheaded. On his way to execution he noticed that the warriors carried spears that were pierced near the head.

Instantly came the solution of the difficulty, and while the inventor was begging for time he awoke.

It was then four o'clock in the morning. Howe jumped out of bed, ran to his workshop, and by nine a needle with an eye at the point had been rudely modelled.

After that the rest was easy.

Only Eight Feet Between.

A well-known sportsman in India had been out all day beating a jungle, with very bad results. Finally he discovered a huge antelope, and ordered his beaters to drive it towards him, while he posted himself behind a dense clump of thorns. The beaters set to work to follow his instructions, but without success.

He was just going to move away, when the beaters shouted frantically:

"A tiger! a tiger!"

He could see nothing, and, supposing it to be only a hyæna, or perhaps a jackal, stepped out from his place of concealment, and there, lying quite near, was an enormous tiger.

Man and beast faced each other for half a minute, barely eight feet apart. With ears flat against its head, and contracted lips showing its white teeth, the tiger glared at the hunter with its fierce eyes, keeping up a snarling growl, and lashing the ground with its tail.

Slowly, slowly (he says), I raised my rifle, and aimed at the broad chest just where the chin allowed me to see it. I recollect now that I fortunately allowed for the rise of the ball at so short a distance, and taking a very fine sight, I

5. Getting "middle."

pulled the trigger. As I did so I jumped back and drew my knife.

It was unnecessary. As the smoke cleared I saw the fierce head dropping on the paws, and the great cat lay still. The shock of the heavy bullet had prevented a single movement.

When a well-known actor was asked at an amateur play which performer he liked best, he replied:

"The prompter, for I saw less and heard more of him than anyone else."

OUR PRIZE LIST.

SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS.

Three Offers of Six Months' Pocket-Money Coming.

AND ANOTHER "CHUMS" BICYCLE.

IT is not too soon to say that the Offers of Prizes in connection with the

First No. of the New Volume of "Chums"

which, as stated on p. 794, will be ready on **Wednesday, August 22nd,** will be unusually magnificent. In addition to

Another "Chums" Bicycle,

the EIGHTEENTH which "Chums" has offered to its readers,

THREE OFFERS,

Each Consisting of

SIX MONTHS' POCKET-MONEY,

will be announced, as well as

MANY OTHER VALUABLE PRIZES,

including

P**T C*****S.**

I want every Chum to spread the news far and wide, and also to take part in the Two following Competitions:—

SIX GOLD-MOUNTED FOUNTAIN PENS

are to be awarded in the following Competition. Every Chum is asked to write on the back of a *postcard*, by means of dots, the phrase

"Chums" New Volume Starts August 22.

I print here a rough example of what I mean, but the letters and the two figures may be of any size or style. Only ink of one colour may be used, and your postcards must reach me on or before **Monday, August 20th, 1900.** The Prizes, which will be given to the senders of the best and most neatly written words, will be divided equally between the Three Classes:—

Class I. For those over 16 years of age;
" II. For those over 14 and under 16 years of age;
" III. For those under 14 years of age.

Four "Chums" Cricket Bats, or

Four Powerful Telescopes,

are here offered in an Easy Postcard Competition. I want each of you to send to me

A Message in the Form of

A Welcome Home to the British Troops

On their Return from South Africa.

You have simply to write, *in not more than twenty-four words*, a Message which you would like "Tommy" to have when he reaches good old England. Such message may take any form the competitor pleases, provided that it be sensible and appropriate. There will be Two Classes:—

Class I.—For those over 15 years of age;
" II.—For those under 15 years of age;

and Two Prizes will be awarded in Each Class to the senders of the Best and most suitable Messages. Postcards must reach me on or before **August 20th, 1900**; and winners will be allowed to choose either a Cricket Bat or a Telescope with brass draw-tubes.

P.S.—All readers of "Chums" can take part in our Competitions, subject to the conditions indicated; my decision as to the winners must be regarded as final; and I cannot enter into any correspondence about the Competitions. All postcards are to be addressed to the "Prize Editor, 'Chums,' La Belle Sauvage, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C." In each of the Competitions referred to, if I am justified by the results, I shall be happy to add to

6. First ball. "How's that?

OUR PRIZE LIST (continued).

my original offers a number of "Chums" Bronze Medals and "Chums" Certificates of Merit as Consolation Prizes. PRIZE EDITOR.

Just Ready.

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BY

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In addition, everyone sending for above packet and applying for one of my approval sheets, will receive gratis a set of 5 Turkey.—**A. J. MUNRO, FORRES, N.B.**

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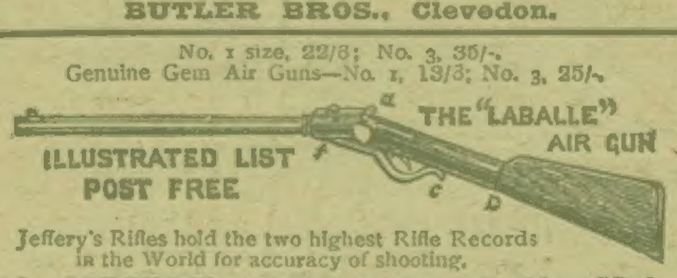

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